THE RISE OF THE SCOTTISH CHAUCERIANS.

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PREFACE

In the following pages an account is given of the Rise of the Scottish Chaucerians differing in many respects from those provided by writers of literary histories. Too frequently the great makars of the fifteenth century have been regarded as the intimate followers of Southern poets and the period of their literary activity explained by appeal to Chaucerian imitation. An attempt is here made to relate their work to the preceding and accompanying poetry of Scotland and to the development of national consciousness which shows a striking parallelism with the poetic movement.

It is only fair to say that the writer is fully aware of the indebtedness of the Scottish Chaucerians to the great English master, especially in matters prosodic. The main contention of this thesis was forced on him when preparing a short course of lectures as holder of a Clark Scholarship at Glasgow University in 1924. Although these discourses were aimed at upholding Chaucerian inspiration as the cause of the Northern movement they led to the conviction that the account was not complete when a full statement had been made of Southern influence. The present study does not oppose the traditional exposition but seeks to supplement it by indicating at least one other force which was acting on these poets.

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The general thesis has not been presented by any writer on Scottish Literature but several have provided evidence on specific points necessary for its establishment. In quoting from these critics an effort has been made to avoid wrong impressions which might arise through the absence of context; unfortunately it is not to be assumed that they subscribe to the theory presented in the following discussion.

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The history of literature attests no fact more strongly than that poetry varies from age to age. Periods occur when the poetic spirit is clothed with strength and when many men utter lofty thoughts in memorable words. These are followed by times when creative activity almost ceases and poetry becomes a technique lacking purpose and devoid of power. At the peak times environing circumstances seem favourable to accomplishment; these great occasions are ministered to by forces other than a blind chance producing the fortuitous appearance of a group of choice spirits. It appears that from time to time periods occur when the "universals" which Aristotle declared to be the language of poetry are readily available, or to put the same idea into the words of Matthew Arnold, when "the power of the moment" is strong. It is worth observing that not infrequently these times of poetic activity have coincided with great eras in national history. Poetry flourishes when in virtue of great events, or by reason of discovery, or through the impact of new influences there occurs a national movement in action and in thought. This is specially true of work that initiates a period or accelerates literary development. An appeal to artistic heredity is often sufficient to explain the continuance/

continuance of a movement but in considering some new manifestation of art it is well to search for the explanation in an altered environment. It is true, of course, that no poet ever stands completely apart from his literary heritage and that new movements in literature do not require a spiritual cataclysm for their inception; nevertheless changes do occur which are so rapid as to produce within a single generation work that differs considerably from the traditional. When this happens, it is necessary to examine the literary forces operating but it is at least equally necessary to attend to non-literary influences.

The Scottish Chaucerians have suffered from a criticism which restricted itself mainly to the recounting of formal and stylistic developments in literature and which neglected the great movements in national history which often accompany it; if they do not actually produce great poetic movements. Their work has been accounted for by placing it in too simple a scheme of literary development; the rise of this important group has been explained by appeal to Chaucerian discipleship. These poets are not mere imitators, following their master with the faltering steps of the dilletante. A scheme of literature which includes such a view of

Henryson/

Henryson or Dunbar has only a Procrustean fitness. A more accurate account would see the work of the Scottish Chaucerians as the product of a variety of forces including the genius of the poets themselves, the literary heritage of Chaucer and of the early Scottish makars, and the very important non-literary influences which operated during the period.

In the following pages an attempt is made to account for the rise of the Scottish Chaucerians by a wider appeal than is usually employed. The general thesis is that the poetic activity of the fifteenth century in Scotland cannot be explained merely on the grounds of devotion to the "Father of English Poetry", but requires also the consideration of such factors as the developing nationalism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the products of the earlier makars. It has been found necessary to substantiate the claim that Scottish nationalism was developing throughout the period and with this end in view a fairly complete summary of the process is given at the outset. It will be well to bear in mind in perusing this discussion of the coming of national consciousness that it is contended that the poetic outburst under consideration was largely a by-products of that development. The second part of the argument/

argument is concerned with the poetry of Scotland before the time of Chaucer while the concluding portion places the Scottish Chaucerians in the line of Scottish literary development and opposes the traditional appeal to Chaucerian discipleship as a sufficient explanation of their origin. Consideration will be given first of all then to the development of nationalism.

The background of any period in literature is not confined to its political history. Not infrequently the passing of kings, the "ins" and "outs" of political parties, the changing of creed at the dictation of secular authority have but little impact on the life of the individual. These spectacular episodes stand out in contrast to the general drama of private life and win for themselves a measure of attention beyond the degree deserved by their significance. This over estimation of political history is all the more mistaken in periods when the changes occurring are particularly restricted to the circles of royal, aristocratic or party interests in the state. Such erroneous evaluation is hardly probable in the period presently under review for the antagonisms of great nobles, and the quarrels between king and barons far from being confined to one social class had their effects on the lives of/

of the whole people. We will see later to what degree the dissensions among the nobility determined the course and speed of national development, but in the meanwhile let us pass in review the principal political changes associated with our period.

The main events up to the very end of the period roughly about 1520 are concerned with the unification of Scotland and the development of nationality. It is fortunately not necessary to consider here the methods and materials of that long compounding which produced the Scottish race. The question of the intermixture is still a puzzle to the historian and the only point of this involved problem which is worth noting in the present study is that the elements were diversified and extremely intractable. What happened prior to the reign of Malcolm Canmore is of no importance at the moment, while the events from the ascension of that monarch to the death of Alexander III are only of minor significance. It was the principal aim of the greatest kings of the Canmore dynasty to extend their rule over the territory that is now included in Scotland. The earliest representative of the line was the first Scottish king to recognise that the key to the destiny of his kingdom was the territory

south/

south, not north of the Forth. English influence through his stay at the court of Edward the Confessor and his marriage to Margaret was particularly strong during his reign but it produced no amicable disposition to his neighbours ruled by Normans. Frequent inroads were directed against the Southerners and in these the Scottish king met with considerable success. His kingdom was anything but united as can be seen from the fact that during one of the incursions into England, Earl Cospatric, a former ally of Malcolm, took advantage of his absence to assist the Normans in attacking Cumberland. The final proof that the work of the Canmore dynasty was far from accomplishment came with the assassination of Malcolm and his eldest son Edward in still another border raid. After his death the conflict between Donald Bane, brother of Malcolm, and Duncan, son of the late king threatened the kingdom with disintegration. With the defeat of Duncan the threat became fact in the division of the country between Donald and Edmund 1094-1097.

English alliances strengthened the position of Edgar 1097-1107 and this support probably accounts for the freedom from insurrection within the kingdom during his reign. That Edgar was aware that the creation of even the appearance of unity/

unity was impossible, is evident from the arrangement made at the end of his reign whereby his brother Alexander with the title of King of the Scots governed the Highlands and part of Lothian, while his younger brother David with the title of Earl ruled over Cumbria and the rest of Lothian. Alexander the Fierce partially broke with the policy of his immediate predecessor by concentrating on the Highlands and isolating himself from Southern influences but the tradition was maintained by the ruler of Strath-clyde. By his foresight and energy David I succeeded in consolidating with some degree of permanence those territories which fortune had given under his control but not even the efficiency of this great monarch could weld the Highlands and Lowlands into a united Scotland. It has already been observed that the successor of Alexander reverted to the practice of earlier kings in having councillors and supporters from over the Border; this is true with the important difference that the English councillors of the earlier Canmore Dynasty were displaced in this reign by Normans. The circumstances of the time, the manner of his succession, and his previous training marked David I to be one of the greatest of the Scottish kings. For a long period at the beginning of his reign he was happy

in his relations with England and profited from the freedom from international broiling by devoting his energies to strengthening the Crown at home. As a result Scotland enjoyed a period of enlightened rule and a consequent steady prosperity which lasted till near the end of the thirteenth century. His Earldom in the South readily supported him on his accession to the throne; trouble came as was to be expected from the North. Angus, Earl of Moray, and his brother Malcolm seized the opportunity while the king was visiting the English Court to rise against him in the hope that the old Celtic line might be re-established in the Highlands but they were overwhelmed at Stracathro. Even this defeat did not end the insurrection and it was only after five years that Moray was finally subdued. With the death of Henry I and the accession of Stephen came the end of the peaceful relations with England. The raids which followed were on a much larger scale than hitherto, and the earlier ones especially brought considerable success to the Scottish forces. The important social changes wrought during his reign do not fall within the scope of the present discussion but reference will be made to these later; in the meanwhile it is to be noted that the comparative lull in the international and national political history afforded opportunity for social development.

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Had David I been trammelled with an English war or with prolonged insurrection in the North, it is certain that the roll of social changes in this period would have been considerably curtailed. Scotland at the end of the reign of David had a greater appearance of unity than she had ever possessed and that unity was of the type which was later to prove permanent. The kingdom had been held together by the control of the North by the South and by the maintenance of a boundary pushed far beyond the Forth. But as in the days at the end of Malcolm's reign ~~as~~ now at the end of David's, much of the ground that had been won was speedily lost and it was demonstrated that contending forces in Scotland could only be held together by an efficient monarch. On the death of Prince Henry the king foresaw that troubled days lay ahead for young Malcolm and did all that was in his power to secure the recognition of his successor by the nobles.

Within a year of the accession of the young king trouble was caused once more by the house of Moray which from the time of its last defeat had been strengthened by marriage alliances. War with England under Henry II was avoided by the capitulation of Malcolm who departed so far from the traditions of his forefathers as to join the ranks of the English. Before the end of his short career Malcolm had to face/

face further risings in the North, in the West, and in Galloway. William the Lyon had the task of atoning for the weakness of his predecessor and throughout his reign was concerned with retrieving the position. At the beginning he reverted to the policy of pushing the boundary southwards and initiated the Auld Alliance in a tentative fashion. This ended disastrously at Alnwick where William was captured. The price of his release was the recognition of the overlordship of the English king for the whole of Scotland under humiliating guarantees including the acceptance of English garrisons in the most important fortresses of the kingdom.

The latter part of William's reign is a tale of oft repeated avowals of allegiance to the English king, of ecclesiastical quarrels and of insurrections throughout the kingdom. Eventually some respite came in all these conflicts. With the accession of Richard I to the throne of England, William made a bargain whereby the independence of Scotland was purchased for 10,000 marks. The old quarrel as to whether Scotland was subject to the dominion of York or Canterbury in ecclesiastical matters ended satisfactorily with the decision that Scotland was subject directly to Rome. Rebellions in Caithness and Ross were quelled.

These belated successes did not restore the power of the Crown to that strength which it had held in the reign of David I but they partially retrieved the misfortunes of the early days of a king of doubtful attainments. Fortunately the mournful tale of failure in political affairs does not require to be repeated concerning the social life of the people. No great advance was made but considering the circumstances it is fortunate that no retrogression falls to be recorded.

With the accession of Alexander II a new chapter in the History of Scotland commences, and though it is relatively brief it is one of the brightest in this tale of many vicissitudes. For a century and a half before, ~~this~~, two quarrels had vexed the country; one was the feud between Celtic and Saxon or Celtic and Norman within the kingdom and it found its typical expression in revolts, especially in the North, against the king, and the other was the dispute with England over the possession of the Northern counties of England or concerning the vassalage of Scotland. Whatever progress there was throughout this period was made in the reigns of kings like Malcolm or David I who succeeded in first solving these political problems; and not infrequently they were aided by weakness or dissension among their adversaries. In the national and international affairs

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of the kingdom the story is one of alternations between the gains of the strong and the losses of the weak with the balance slightly favourable to the development of a Scottish nation.

With the coming of Alexander II to the throne, Scotland began to reap the benefits of the work done by Malcolm and David I. The Celtic peoples were firmly held by the power of the king supported by the Norman nobles while the vacillation and weakness of John and Henry III of England removed all apprehensions regarding renewed attempts at the subjugation of Scotland. In spite of the late successes of his predecessor, Alexander's reign opened with at least one condition that must have been judged inauspicious; he was barely seventeen years of age. As could be expected, a renewed effort was made in the Highlands once again by the house of Moray. The stronghanded crushing of previous revolts made it impossible for this rising to receive so much support as previous efforts even in spite of the help given by the Irish mercenaries and this attempt at overthrowing the power of the young king was speedily ended. The significance of a weak ruler in England now appeared when the English barons bought the support of Alexander against the king for the promise of the Northern counties.

Alexander/

Alexander led armies into England but his scheme for pushing the border further south was frustrated by the death of John and the renewal of allegiance by the English barons to the young Henry III. After a futile effort at substantiating the claim maintained by certain of the English barons on behalf of Louis son of Philip Augustus, Alexander came to terms with the English king. This left him free to attend to internal affairs and with the Highlands quiet for the time being he could devote his energies to the consolidation of his kingdom. He concentrated on Argyle which had never been under the control of the king and after one failure he succeeded in conquering the district and ensuring a more thorough allegiance. Soon revolts broke out in the North, notably in Caithness, 1222, and Moray while a debatable succession to the lordship of Galloway led to one of the wild outbursts for which this district was famous. Alexander crushed these ruthlessly and demonstrated that the king's power could reach to the limits of his domains. Towards the end of the reign at least two incidents occurred which threatened to disturb the peaceful relations with England. The first was the attempt by Henry to revive the arrangement made with William the Lyon after his capture at Alnwick; this was met by a counter claim by Alexander to the/

the Northern counties. The incident ended in 1236 with a compromise favourable to the Scottish king. The second arose from a quarrel between Walter Bisset and the Earl of Athol. Alexander bowed to the will of the nobles and banished Bisset who immediately incited Henry to war with the Scots. Opposing forces marched together but war was averted chiefly because the English nobles had no mind to support the king in this venture. It will be advisable to pass on to the reign of Alexander III and having recounted the main events therein take stock of the position and review this golden age of Scottish history. The first nine years of this reign were marred by the feuds of two great parties, one led by the High Justiciary, Alan Durward, the other by the Earl of Menteith. Henry III interfered, at first with considerable success but the opposition of Menteith who played the part of leader of a patriotic party frustrated his efforts. With the end of the minority came the end of party strife and the beginning of a finer national prosperity. The only great event in political history throughout this long period was the addition of the Hebrides to the possessions of the Scottish crown. Then at the close came the series of domestic and national misfortunes. Within three years two sons and a daughter died/

died leaving the Maid of Norway as the sole successor to the Crown. The King married again in 1285 but was killed in March of the following year. This was one of the most peaceful reigns in early Scottish history. In internal affairs its antagonisms were expressed in the machinations of party rather than in civil war while in the international realm, difficulties were overcome not by resort to arms but by compromise. The power of the central authority once more could be felt in the outlying districts, new territory was added and the earlier possessions more firmly consolidated. These two reigns cover a period of great prosperity. The compounding of peoples had gone on apace from the days of Kenneth Macalpine until something resembling a nation had been fashioned. It is significant that by 1286 Scotland possessed the territories which were to remain with her and that in actual deed the power of the Crown was known throughout the land. The kings who had been fortunate in having weak rivals across the Border had concentrated their efforts on the consolidation of the North and had proved capable rulers.

Such in brief is the story of political history from Malcolm Canmore to Alexander II. It is a tale of rebellion and insurrection, of conflict between Norman and Celt/

Celt, of strife and compromise with England. The kingdom has its periods of great success and of great failure but with all the eddyings and whirlings of successive years there is a flow steady in direction and gathering in force. It would be idle to search for evidences of nationalism in the fullest sense even at the end of the period. The great achievement of these years was not the establishment of popular institutions or the upbuilding of a racial heritage about which national sentiment could grow. It was rather the more primary and elementary accomplishment of territorial unification.

It will be well now to trace briefly the social and religious changes over this same period so that it may be possible to make some estimate of the degree of nationalism existing in Scotland prior to the War of Independence. The account is bound to be scanty because of the scarcity of evidence. The records for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, slight in themselves, are not eked out by contemporary literature whereas in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there are many accounts of travellers, Acts of Parliament, Guild regulations and other stores of information supplemented by the outpourings of the greatest age in Scottish literature. This lack of information concerning the earlier period is unfortunate, for the changes then occurring were so fundamental as to render the institutions at the end of the period almost entirely different from those at the beginning. These two centuries see the introduction and development of the Feudal System, the decay of the Celtic church and the establishment of the Roman, and the rise of the burghs. It is probable that these changes were initiated even before the days of Malcolm and it is certain that they received considerable impetus during his reign. Further rapid development took place under David I and the last named change, the rise of the burghs/

burghs, was considerably accelerated during the reign of William the Lyon.

Consider first of all the introduction of the Feudal System. It cannot be too frequently asserted that this System of land tenure and general organisation into classes was not suddenly thrust upon either England or Scotland and that it did not do violence to the society which existed before its coming. The England of pre-Conquest days had many features in common with the designs of Duke William. The Feudal System was not an entirely new principle of organisation; it was a more thorough application of the old with certain modifications. The terror of the Danes increased largely the number of ceorls giving service to an overlord as payment for his protection; the principle of national service had existed although not thoroughly applied in the Saxon fyrd. If the Feudal System produced no great rupture with the past in England where it was imposed by such a powerful exponent as the Conqueror, still less did it do so in Scotland where it came through the medium of the Scottish kings. The tribal organisation of pre-Conquest England, the practice of rendering service for land, the general hierarchy of classes with the king are all found in Celtic Scotland. (An excellent discussion of the/

the Scottish precursor of Feudalism is contained in Cochran-Patrick's "Mediaeval Scotland".) The precise function of the mormaers has not been determined nor has it been made clear whether they acted separately or as a body but it is most probable that they did the work of the Saxon ealdormen while the lesser maers and toisechs acted in capacities like those of the lesser officials in England. The geographical barriers of the Highlands prevented the Feudal System from becoming completely national. North of that ill-defined line stretching South-West from the Moray Firth the old Celtic order was scarcely disturbed and whatever changes were made concerned the local unit rather than the relations between the great landowner and the King. In England one effect of the Feudal System was the increase of serfdom with its consequent loss of individuality. This also appeared in Scotland where social ranks became firmly fixed in economic castes. There were the carles, nativi, or serfs, cottarii living together in a village and owning anything up to nine acres of land each, and lastly the husbandi or farmers with about twenty-five acres of land. The first group were transferred with the land on which they lived and were subject to a variety of fines and exactions.

The whole System was based on the assumption that the King/

King was the owner of all the land under his government and that he had granted certain parts of it to his great subjects as the purchase price of certain services due by them to him. This assumption was far from clear especially in those regions where hereditary rights were not established. If the weak oldest son could be set aside for a strong younger one either by the exertions of the energetic princeling or by the support of a powerful following, the succession of property was so much the less fixed. In Galloway and the Highlands especially, the principal right to inheritance was the strong hand and it is in these regions that the fundamental assumption was most widely contested in practice. The king's claim to ownership was strengthened by the granting of charters to the nobles for the possession of their lands. Many of the recipients especially in the reign of David I were Normans who were glad to promise and perform services in return for these grants which came in large measure from the Crown lands. Undoubtedly some of the earlier owners were dispossessed but in many instances original holders had their rights confirmed by charter. This practice was followed by all the kings from the time of the introduction of the Feudal System to the end of the period immediately under review. The first effects were entirely favourable

to the Crown but with the passage of time the consequent evils became more and more accentuated. The baron whose power had been created or confirmed by the King was not at all likely to prove fractious towards his benefactor and as a result the duties would be performed without protest. This is precisely what happened at the beginning and consequently the power of the Crown was strengthened by the willing support of the Feudal barons. In the first two hundred years from the inception of the System the sources of conflict in Scotland were not the civil disturbances within the System but the insurrections of the Highland barons who lay practically outside the System, and the bickerings with the kings of England over the desire of one king to extend his domains at the expense of the other. In these quarrels the help of the barons South of the Highland line was invaluable for it made possible the subjugation of the North and the establishment of a border which was later to be maintained. The consolidation of Scotland was undoubtedly hastened by the help of the Southern barons whose goodwill had been purchased partially by the granting of Charters. Great as was this advantage from the Feudal System its value was considerably reduced by the subsequent evils; the gains at the end of the thirteenth century were more than/

than counterbalanced by the middle of the fifteenth. The barons in the later years, strong by virtue of their feudal organisation opposed Kings, whose gains therefrom were not commensurate with their own. This led to the weary struggle which marked the reigns of many of the early Stuart kings. The triumphs of the War of Independence were still glowing memories when the dreary tale of violence, misrule and malevolent political manoeuvring began. No group existed on which the Crown could consistently rely, and the great barons, forgetful of feudal obligations, regarded the king as a piece in the game whose prize was not national prosperity but personal aggrandisement and prestige. Few kings could cope with opposition of this order and the House of Stuart with its frequent minorities could provide no succession of kings capable of enforcing the claims of the Crown. The struggle continued then until the sixteenth century when the Feudal System itself had crumbled and when through a variety of circumstances the power of the king and of the people had increased while the strength of the barons had diminished. The Feudal System up to the time of the War of Independence strengthened the Crown by bringing to its aid the forces of the great barons; it made possible the territorial unification of Scotland by extending the power of the central authority to the/

the Highlands; it provided the strength necessary for the establishment and maintenance of the border in its present position. It will appear in greater detail when reviewing the political background of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries how it led to the great conflict between king and barons, a conflict in whose fire and heat a nation was moulded.

Next in importance to the introduction of the Feudal System in the social history of the period is the rise of the towns. The existence of these is closely related to the rise and fall of the Feudal System for ~~while~~ though they developed together, the two were practically incompatible. The burghs were one day to be the upholders of the king's power against the barons and in a small degree the refuge of the serfs. The earliest charters extant were granted by William the Lyon but there can be no doubt that burghs existed long before this period; they existed in Celtic Scotland but it is only within the period presently under review that their development became a matter of policy.*

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*The origin of the burghs is put clearly in an article on "The Municipal Institutions of Scotland" by James D. MWarwick in "The Scottish Historical Review", January and April 1904. "There seems to be no reason to doubt that at a time anterior to any existing Scottish legislation, the little village communities which grew around Royal and Baronial Castles and Religious Houses, or on sites otherwise suitable, cultivated - with the sanction and largely/

The earliest records concerning the government of these towns are the Laws of the Four Burghs. This organisation, the precursor of the existing Convention of Burghs, consisted of a Hansa or League originally of Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh and Stirling but defections and additions caused many variations in its membership. This was not the earliest league of municipalities for there is evidence of one of more remote origin North of the Forth. The earliest part of the code of the Southern Hansa up till a few years ago was considered to belong to the reign of David I; some doubt has been cast on the genuineness of these early productions by Sir A.C.Lawrie. For our present purposes the doubt is of no great importance, for another record confirming the type of municipal government falls well within the period. This is the "Laws of the Gild" made for Berwick in 1249, a document which would be of great value even if its regulations were confined to the city of its origin but whose worth is considerably enhanced for/

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largely for the benefit of their lords - such scanty trade as was then practicable. But their position was precarious. They were probably in a position of absolute villeinage and had no rights or privileges, save such as the policy or caprice of their lords allowed. The protection they enjoyed was also burdened with heavy impositions. But in the process of time the Sovereign and the more powerful nobles came to recognise it to be to their interest to encourage the development of the little trading communities which had sprung up around them, and this they did by the concession of privileges in the form largely of monopolies and exclusive dealing."

for us by the fact that the Laws were widely accepted as models. The charters given to burghs are unfortunately of little value for revealing the nature of local government, but the other two records are sufficiently full to enable a fairly complete account to be made. The Leges Burgorum show that the town was to be governed by praepositi elected by "the common council of the good men of the town". This is confirmed in the Laws of the Gild thus; "We ordain by common consent that the community of Berwick shall be governed by 24 good men, of the better, more discreet, and trustworthy of that burgh thereto chosen, together with the mayor and four bailies. Item we ordain that the mayor and bailies shall be chosen at the sight and the consideration of the whole community. And if any controversy be on the election of the mayor and bailies, then their electors shall be made by the oath of 24 good men of the said burgh, elected to choose one person to rule the said community." The rights were attended to by the Lord Chamberlain who presided over the Convention and who visited the royal burghs for the purpose of holding an ayre on the king's behalf. At these gatherings all burgesses were compelled to attend and a scrutiny was made to ensure that all dues were being fully paid. The rights of the burgesses were presented at meetings of the Convention when claims could be made by either/

either the whole group or a single member while further opportunity was given at the ayre held by the Lord Chamberlain. It will be seen that the organisation was one that bade fair to maintain the liberty of the cities. There is a democratic air about the transactions of the Scottish burghs in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which compares most favourably with the spirit of the municipalities throughout the rest of Europe. The rights held by the royal burghs of trade monopolies within their district and of free transfer of goods were firmly maintained under an enlightened Crown patronage. Quite apart from their use as evidences of burghal control and management, the Gild Laws serve a most important purpose in presenting materials for reconstructing the social life of the early Scottish towns. The Laws originally in Latin but with a contemporary Scottish version show clearly how important were the services rendered to the community by their promulgators. Berwick itself was well suited to be the origin of a code that was so widely adopted; her importance as a trading centre and as one of the border gates gave her a prestige which would assist the acceptance of her Gild Laws. The oft quoted description from the Lanercost Chronicle of the thirteenth century sets her forth as "a city so populous and of such trade that it might justly be called another Alexandria,

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whose riches were the seas and the waters its walls. In those days its citizens being most wealthy and devout gave noble alms."

The beginning of our period witnessed a development of industry which like many another desirable change was accelerated in the reign of David I. This is of course closely related to the rise of the towns in his reign and in those that followed immediately. A glimpse of the fortunate state of affairs may be obtained from the description of Berwick quoted from the Lanercost Chronicle; other evidence can be found from Scottish documents in the keeping of H.M.Register House. These do not give anything in the least resembling trading statistics but they contain many statements which incidentally prove the existence of prosperity in industry and trade. One group of facts culled from a variety of sources show the increasing wealth of the towns produced by industry and trade; there are statements of the amounts paid for special purposes such as the relief from the Treaty of Falaise by the various orders of society. In the actual instance mentioned the proportions are not available but in the following year when a general tax was levied, the barons paid 10,000 marks while the burghs paid 6,000. The main evidence of

commercial/

commercial enterprise in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries takes the form of records of individual transactions and of charters granting exemption from toll or particular rights in foreign trade. Many facts of this order might be arrayed but they are stated in the National Records and have been efficiently summarised by Cochran-Patrick in his "Mediaeval Scotland". The significant matter for the present purpose is that these accounts of private enterprise suddenly diminished at the end of our period with the coming of the War of Independence.

In reviewing the political history of the two centuries before the efforts at the subjugation of Scotland made by the first Edward it was noted that there was a gradual accession of power to the central authority and a steady progress towards territorial unification of Scotland. This development had its lapses with the coming of feeble rulers but the general tendency was progressive. The story of the forward movement in political history is paralleled in the social and commercial with this difference that the checks and retrogressions of the former were not repeated in the latter. The reign of Alexander III witnessed the culmination of a prosperity that had grown throughout two hundred years and unfortunately it marked its first decline.

Allied/

Allied to the question of development of the Feudal System and the rise of the towns is the matter of Crown revenue. The general thesis hitherto maintained that until the beginning of the War of Independence there had been a gradual increase in the power of the central authority over two centuries can be tested most thoroughly by a study of the amount and distribution of taxation. In the reign of Malcolm Canmore the principal sources of revenue were the hereditary dues originating from the pre-Feudal tribal System. These took the form principally of grants for service, payments in kind, and provisions for maintenance made to the king. With the introduction of coinage and the development of the Feudal System in the reign of David I some of these dues were paid in money. That monarch's activities, social and political, involved an increased Crown expenditure which was met in measure by the new revenue from the developments in commerce within the rising burghs. This revenue was regular and within limits predictable in amount. The increased financial transactions of this reign led to the appointment of a Lord Chamberlain one of a group of officials made necessary by the Feudal System. From then onwards dues were paid more frequently in money and they increased in amount with the/

the ever increasing national commitments. These dues were not taxes in the modern sense of the term but were limited to feudal payments to the king as chief of the barons. They were not granted by any representative assembly of the people but were paid as legitimate claims to the Crown by vassals in return for certain privileges. Cochran-Patrick has described the ordinary type of revenue thus: "The ordinary sources of income were (1) the rents of the lands in the possession of the Crown; (2) the payments due from the Thanages; (3) the casualties of ward, marriage, relief and non-entry exigible from time to time from the Crown vassals; (4) fines imposed on misdoers; (5) the escheats, or forfeited estates of attainted persons; (6) the rents derived from the royal burghs; (7) compositions payable for letters of gift, remissions, and legitimation; (8) the Castle wards or dues exacted from lands in the immediate vicinity of some of the principal fortresses towards the expense of upholding them; (9) the duties payable on merchandise called the great customs; (10) the profits arising from the coinage of money."

These were the principal sources of revenue from the days of David I to the death of James IV. Evidence of the greater power of the kings is to be seen in the fact that by/

by the end of the reign of Alexander III a valuation roll existed dealing with a considerable amount of the property of the country. It was not however till the fourteenth century when Bruce after his national success was granted a fixed payment that the practice of paying assessed dues was begun. The machinery for collection depended on the roll made in the reign of Alexander III. It should be noted that something of the same principle had been practised in the taxes for extraordinary national purposes which are recorded from the time of Malcolm IV onwards. Thus it appears that by the end of this period the feudal dues had been stabilised, the contributions from the towns had risen to be of great value, the principle of a nation-wide tax had been granted, and the material for assessment collected. Once again we see that the latter half of the thirteenth century finds the Crown in a stronger position than ever before and the way left clear apparently for a period of continued prosperity.

Various other aspects of national life might be sketched but let us close the evidence with an account of the development up to the end of the thirteenth century of ecclesiastical affairs. The Church in Scotland at the time of Malcolm Canmore was a Celtic foundation mainly descended/

descended from products of Columban missionary effort. By the end of the eleventh century the zeal of the early Saints departed and there ensued that secularising of the religious institutions common to mediaeval Europe. The decay was partially checked by Margaret's sons who gave much devotion to works of piety and to the upbuilding of the prestige of a Church which their mother had faithfully served. By the time of David I, the "sore sanct for the Crown", only a remnant of the Culdee foundations remained and these were anomalies in the Kingdom which David sought to fashion. He had aimed at the upbuilding of a single Church and that Church could never be the one associated with the Scotland of pre-Feudal days. Once again in this development of the Romanised Church, we see the shaping of a nation but unfortunately the Church supported by the descendants of Margaret was not destined to rouse the enthusiasm of the people. In the formative process good work was done in the reign of Alexander I who sought to give diocesan power to his Bishops. He made a further effort at establishing a Scottish Church by requiring that his Bishops should not acknowledge the authority over Scotland claimed by the Archbishop of Canterbury or York. This is seen in his appointments to St. Andrews of his first/

first Bishop. Turgot was prepared to recognise the authority of York and was set aside in favour of Eadmer who acknowledged the Archbishop of Canterbury as his superior; he also was set aside and on his death, Robert of Scone was appointed. David I continued the work by his suppression of the Keledei by the establishment of the parish and by the creation of new Bishoprics to supplement the pre-existing four. These changes completed the organisation of the Scottish Church and left it as a potential formative force of great power for the shaping of a nation. It seemed as if all that was required for its effective operation was a clear recognition of its independance of Canterbury and York and this was forthcoming in 1188, in the reign of William the Lyon when following on an impasse arising from ill-defined ecclesiastical obligations set forth in the Treaty of Falaise it was finally agreed that Scotland was directly under the authority of the Pope. The decision was confirmed in the reign of Alexander II and a further extension of power granted in the agreement that the Scottish Church instead of having to accept the Pope's nomination for the President of her Synodal Council could elect her own candidate.

The period was distinguished by the building of the great abbeys of Scotland. With the coming of the religious orders/

orders magnificent erections were created for their use. Within one reign, that of David I, Melrose, Dryburgh, Holyrood, Cambuskenneth and Jedburgh were founded. It appeared as if circumstances could hardly have been more favourable for the creation of a Church that would be a great spiritual force in the country. It was a relatively new creation formed to take the place of one whose organisation and spirit were alike ill-adapted to changing conditions. A succession of kings had upheld and extended the power of the leaders and had done all that administration could do by perfecting its organisation; new access of power had been gained by the coming of the gladly-welcomed monastic orders; wealth had been lavished in the founding of abbeys. Yet in spite of it all the Scottish Church by the time of the War of Independence had lost its power and by the fifteenth century was regarded as fair game for the satirist of the most bitter order. The very wealth which was apparently a signal of its prosperity became the cause of its downfall. Privation was changed to luxury, zeal became sloth, piety gave place to vice. The change was by no means sudden; within the period of immediate concern only the symptoms appear in the form of attention to secular affairs and a somewhat petulant objection to the failure of cleric and laymen in the fulfilment of religious and ecclesiastical/

ecclesiastical obligations. For the thirteenth century the main source is "Ecclesiae Scoticanae Statuta tam Provincialia quam Synodalia quae Supersunt".*

Not all the abbeys of Christendom could stand bulwark to the forces revealed there. By the end of the reign of Alexander III the destructive agents were busily at work but the fabric still stood. The kings of the thirteenth century may have seen evidences of declining spiritual power in the Church but undoubtedly they saw it as an institution with greater temporal wealth and with wider potency than ever before. In the welding of peoples an accepted Church has often acted as an integrating agency; the/

*A single quotation in Hume Brown's translation reveals the state of affairs in regard ~~first~~ to the morality of the clergy, ~~and second to the attitude of laymen~~. "The Life and Good Name of Clerics - We ordain that the life and manners of clerics be reformed, that all of them and especially those in sacred orders, study to live continently and chastely, shunning every vice of lust; that all clerics carefully abstain from wine and drunkenness; that they practice no secular trade, especially such as are dishonourable; that they avoid all taverns except when on a journey they are driven thereto by necessity; that they wear a becoming crown and tonsure; that priests wear close cassocks, except some just fear should demand the change or transformation of their habit; and that other clerics bear themselves decently in dress, gesture and all things else. Let them wholly abstain from those parsons who are withheld from their duties by the General Council. We specially and strictly order priests and parsons, under risk of losing their offices and benefices, that they live continently and decently, that they banish their concubines, and for the rest hold no intercourse with them, neither/

the Scottish Church fulfilled that function not so much by spiritual dominion as by ecclesiastical authority. The Scottish kings moulded the Feudal System and developed the towns thereby gaining power for the Crown and preparing for the rise of a nation. Similar effects were produced by their encouragement of the Church. They created a powerful institution, national in its scope and with a practicable local organisation and although it was doomed by the end of the period it was through internal causes not readily controllable by the kings. They had done all that was possible to develop its resources and increase its prestige; its failure was ignominious but ere its fall the cause of national unity had been so far served by the recognition that it was a Scottish Church.

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neither in their own houses nor the houses of others unless they wish by so doing to be deprived of their office and benefice."

Having made a preliminary review of Scotland prior to the War of Independence we will now outline the political and social history of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in order that we may have a background for the Scottish poetry which is our main study. The preceding pages contain a record of consolidation and increasing prosperity culminating in the Golden Age of Scottish History. Considerable progress had been made towards the creation of a nation by the knitting of the country together. It would however be erroneous to regard this stabilising of borders and extension of central authority as evidence of the existence of nationalism as the term is understood today. The work was far from complete but the preparations were well advanced. It remains to show that the War of Independence was of inestimable value in the coming of a united Scotland by its awakening of national consciousness in later years.

While it is true that unifying forces were active in the prosperous days of the Alexanders it requires no far searching for evidence to show that a stable kingdom was still at best a hope for the future. The oft-told story of the early pretenders to the succession with its incidents of Edwardian machination and aristocratic jockeying for position is in itself a proof that the nation was non-existent. Before

judgment/

judgment was given between the two most important claimants Edward secured for himself apparently with the utmost ease, a controlling interest in the council of the four guardians and made a bid for the possession of the fortified places in Scotland. Among the Scottish negotiators both at Brigham and at Norham mention is made of the "Communitas", but the persons so named played no important part in the transactions in either place; and it is a matter of uncertainty if they were in any way representative. Thus in the character of the negotiations and in the personnel of the negotiators there is ample evidence of the fact that rational consciousness was not to be found in Scotland at the end of the thirteenth century. In the years that followed the settlement on Balliol, Edward made it clear that in his intention Scotland was to be a province of England. When in 1296 the English king invaded Scotland and marched triumphantly from Berwick to Elgin and when he finally carried the emblem of sovreignty from Scone, it seemed as if his ambition had been realised. Then came the revolt of Wallace whose shadowy movements need not be discussed here. His position was so insecure that a single defeat meant a rapid defection from his forces, and defeat overtook him at Falkirk. Within a few years Edward had stamped out all traces of the patriot save those graven on the hearts of the people and England

again/

again was victorious. The latter state was worse than the former, for rebellion had proved unsuccessful the first time and, besides, the English had been forewarned by the popularity of the rising. The very severity of the conqueror was however to prove his undoing for he nourished in the people a hatred of himself that readily became a motive for opposing his rule. The next struggle when it did come was bound to be on a larger scale and of greater severity than the first if a leader could be found capable of directing the pent-up power of the Scots engendered by their hatred of their neighbours. Success in that campaign would most probably be a factor in the moulding of the nation but it was essential that the leader should be one who might readily become a national hero. The figure of Bruce has been surrounded with so much romance by the poets and no less imaginative chroniclers that it is difficult to arrive at the valuation set upon him by his contemporaries especially at the beginning of his career,*

because/

* W.M.Mackenzie in "The Battle of Bannockburn" says "But in territories where the Comyn interest had sway, particularly in Galloway, the larger cause was drowned in jealousy and hate. Fortunately these territories were widely separated from each other, could not locally co-operate and thus could be mastered in detail. Bruce himself wasted Buchan in a fashion that left a shuddering memory for half a century, and the Comyn who was its earl had to find refuge in England. The same fate in their turn overtook the Macdougalls of Lorn, who found no friends among the Argyllshire chiefs. Galloway had been heavily hammered by the two Bruces, and Douglas on more than one occasion - in the autumn following the success of Louden Hill and again in the

year/

Because of his family and because of his early career Bruce did not seem to be the man to lead a united Scotland in a struggle with England for independence, and in actual fact he never had the whole country behind him in his campaigns. But even if Bruce had been acclaimed by all his countrymen in Scotland as the accepted leader of a nationalist party, he would not have had a united country to lead. In the South many Scots were bound to England by bonds of Feudal obligation or prudence and sometimes both. In the Chronicon de Lanercost the writer commenting on the early campaigns of Bruce says "In all the aforesaid campaigns the Scots were so divided among themselves that sometimes the father was on the Scottish side and the son on the English, and vice versa; also one brother might be with the Scots and another with the English; yea even the same individual may be first with one party and then with the other. But all those who were with the English were merely feigning either because it was the stronger party or in order to save the lands they possessed in England; for their hearts were always with their own people although their persons might not be." The chronicler in the last sentence seems to look at these Anglicised Scots as questionable assets but this may be an example of his prejudice on behalf of the English which occasionally led him/

year after, when many of the local gentry were slain and others of the people driven across the border."

him to minimise the resources of his friends and exaggerate those of his enemies. Barbour makes mention of these English-serving Scots in the roll-call of the forces of his enemies at Bannockburn. George Eyre Todd renders the appropriate passage thus - "From Portiers, Aquitaine and Bayonne he had full many of great renoun. And from Scotland besides he had a great following of men of might." Barbour is supported by "Liber Pluscardensis". With a leader who alienated almost half of his countrymen and with a country some of whose nobles paid allegance to the enemy, the cause of independence did not have the happiest of auspices. Add to this the fact that Bruce himself had changed sides on several occasions and that he lost the sympathy of the clergy by his wild murder and the tale of unpropitious circumstances seems overwhelming. It should be observed however that the practice of breaking troth was so common even among the clergy that Bruce would not be regarded as an exception to the rule while religion and morality had fallen so low that even a murder within the sanctuary could be forgotten without much difficulty. Such qualifications of the character of the aspirant to national leadership cannot disguise the fact that the beginning of the campaign for independence was inauspicious. Scotland was certainly not a nation when he began his work and the composition of the forces/

forces at Bannockburn together with the other considerations mentioned show that a nation did not exist even at that triumphal hour.

It would be utterly false to assume that Bannockburn was of no avail in creating a nation but it is likewise false to think of it as the completion of a free and united Scotland. The efficacy of the event was not due to any realisation of brotherhood suddenly caught in the moment that threatened common disaster; its chief potency consists in its memorial value whereby a victory great in itself and appearing still greater against a background of oppression and defeat became the centre gem in the proud crown of Scottish tradition. This romantic tale of an adventurer going out with a handful to conquer a kingdom, wresting it from the tyrant's grasp, was to be cherished; it was a heritage whose possessors were the closer kinsmen by virtue of their possession. It was not the culmination but the inception of national adventure; its power as nation-builder was greater in the hands of Barbour than in the hands of Bruce. What do we mean by a nation? A people speaking a common language, governed by themselves, with national institutions, religious and secular? This is not enough. There must always be a heritage of achievement in literature, in arms, in religion; it may even be in trade and commerce. These/

These at least are the essentials and Scotland was beginning to acquire them in common with the rest of Europe. Nation there could not be in mediaeval Europe with its submission in religion, its distrust of vernacular languages, with its bickerings between king and barons and its negation of popular sanction. The significance of Bannockburn symbolised in the triumph of spearmen over horsemen is in its effect on the development of national consciousness, for the creation of which it produced a most important element, a heritage of achievement. In estimating this significance the previous history of Scotland must be remembered. Boundaries had been settled and a fairly centralised government had existed on more than one occasion. It was after these essentials of nationalism had been created that the new elements of hatred of a common enemy and the memory of a common triumph were added thus bringing nearer the time of nationhood. It has often been asserted that the work of developing the Scottish nation was advanced greatly by Bruce by his summoning of burgesses for the first time to a representative Parliament in 1326 at Cambuskenneth. This statement has been revised of recent years and its looseness is made clear by the criticism of Professor Rait (now Principal Rait) in his "Parliaments of Scotland". It is indisputable that Bruce did call burgesses to the assembly at/

at Cambuskenneth where provision was made for meeting the expenses of the late war through the payment of "the tenth penny of all rents according to the old extent". These burgesses were not members of the Scottish Parliament or of the Council.* Other acts of King Robert show that he was not the upholder of the right of the burgesses and apart from those, the very fact that the Third Estate was not effective and probably non-existent for another thirty years is sufficient to destroy the illusion that he created a Parliament with popular representation in Scotland. The rise of the Third Estate to a measure of authority belongs to a later period; and its creation at that time is evidence that the process of building a nation was in the early fourteenth century far from complete. This matter is discussed in its appropriate place later.

The/

*Professor Rait says "The word used to describe the attendance of those who bound themselves by the agreement was not the technical term "convenientibus", which had no such implication. Vassals of subject-superiors could not have attended Parliament, for by the theory which, with a few exceptions, governed the composition of the Scottish Parliament to the end of its history, tenants-in-chief represented the whole of their lands, whether retained in demesne or held by vassals. Nor is there in the document any suggestion that this important agreement was made "in pheno Parliamento", it was made "rege tenente Parliamentum". The inference is that the "convenientes" formed an assembly which met outside Parliament, a national Convention convoked for a special purpose. The agreement made in July 1326 was solemnly recorded in and confirmed by a Parliament which met in February 1328."

The popular idea of Bruce as the leader of a consolidated nation playing the double role of victorious commander of the people's army and political emancipator does not stand before the feeblest attack of historical criticism. The part he did play was that of the maker of tradition, the creator of the material for a nation-wide sentiment, the resister of a threatened and accomplished tyranny. The final proof that nationality had not been achieved under the hero-king can be found in the ~~useful~~ woe records of his successors. After his death Scotland was reduced to much the same condition as that existing before Alexander II and it was fortunate for her independence that the "auld enemy" was preoccupied, In a little more than three years Edward Balliol, the son of Bruce's rival was crowned at Scone. Notice the position after four years. The Disinherited Barons had joined Balliol with success. The first regent Randolph, Earl of Moray had died before he struck a blow at his enemies, the second regent Donald, Earl of Mar, had been defeated and slain at Dupplin Moor, the third regent, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell had been captured, while a like fate overtook Sir William Douglas, the foremost Scottish soldier of his day. The fourth regent Sir Archibald Douglas led an army against England after/

after Edward III had openly espoused the cause of Balliol and he was killed and his army routed at Halidon Hill. David II left the country.

Within a few months afterwards Balliol and Edward III divided the kingdom, Edward receiving considerable territory in the South-East of Scotland and being recognised as Superior, At this point Fortune changed and conferred on Scotland a number of favours which if not great individually were of cumulative worth. The two old leaders returned, the Disinherited Barons broke up, the French king showed himself active in Scottish interests, and most important of all the Hundred Years' War broke out. The work that had cost Bruce years of hard campaigning had to be begun again, and slowly the strongholds of the country fell into the hands of the king's supporters. A new calamity befell the Scots in 1346 with the capture of David II at Neville's Cross and the overwhelming defeat of his army. Scotland was in a sorry state in the succeeding years, harried by pestilences and by vengeful raids from across the Border. David a prisoner in England for more than eleven years was ready to sell his country for his freedom but in the end returned after pledging to pay 100,000 marks as ransom. The miseries resulting from the pestilences and from over-taxation were not alleviated by the king whose extravagances were/

were notorious, and rebellion broke out under Douglas. This was soon suppressed but the only attempt at removing the grievances was a proposal made by the king that he should bargain for the cancelling of the ransom with the promise that if he died without male heirs Edward III should be his successor. The rising tide of nationalism can be gauged in the unequivocal refusal by the Scottish Parliament. It can also be measured by the appearance of Barbour's "Bruce". The reign of Robert II was not distinguished by the misfortunes which had characterised especially the beginning of that of David II. The peace which existed between England and Scotland for the greater part of his reign was due to the weakness of the English rather than the strength of the Scots. The king himself was too mild a man to take advantage of the calm for the work of reconstruction; his reign is noted only for that theme of romance, the Battle of Otterbourne. In the succeeding years under Robert III occurred the first of the long series of insurrections, incidents in the tragic story of king against barons. The preliminaries were the wild adventure of the Wolf of Badenock and the barbaric fight on the North Inch of Perth. Then came the rivalry between Rothesay and Albany with its division of nobles into opposing camps. In the meanwhile strained relations with/

with England led to raid and counter-raid in miserable sequence. Rothesay died in suspicious circumstances and the last blow fell on the aged Robert III with the capture of his son, the future James I, by the English. The regency of the first Duke of Albany saw at least one notable event, in the Battle of Harlaw which insured the control of the Highlands by a central authority. In his relations with England he met with no great success but apart from the Foul Raid he sustained no defeat. His regency seems to have been maintained by allowing considerable privilege to the Scottish barons, a policy which was developed by his son and successor. The lawlessness of the barons under Duke Murdoch and especially the disregard of control shown by the regent's own sons set a task which required the courage, enterprise and eventually the life of the first of the Scottish Chaucerians, James I.

Having sketched the political history of this period it is necessary to turn to its constitutional and social changes. First in importance is the development of Parliament and the Convention of Burghs. It has already been pointed out that Robert I had not introduced popular representation into Parliament but that this innovation belonged to a period more than thirty years after his death. The/

The major influence in the reign of the Bruce on the Scottish Parliament was the increase in the power of certain members of the Second Estate by the strengthening of some noble families at the expense of others. During the years before and after Bannockburn the King had rewarded his friends with gifts of lands forfeited by his opponents and thus left for his successor the task of meeting the challenges of the disinherited.

The kingdom indeed was divided between two warring groups one centred round David II and the other round Edward Balliol. The effect of Bruce's policy was to give greater power than ever into the hands of a few great barons and therefore to strengthen the Second Estate in the government of the country. It was impossible for him to foresee the civil turmoil which resulted eventually from his policy or to imagine that through a succession of weak kings such opportunity should be given for the rise of the nobles in contending faction. The strength of the Second Estate was accompanied by weakness in the First which seemed to lack men of statesmanship and forceful character. The absence of a strong ecclesiastical party is not sufficiently explained by the early conduct of Bruce but finds its cause in more fundamental changes then occurring in the Church. At the beginning of the reign of David II the Scottish Parliament/

Parliament was practically in the hands of the barons and the part played by the burgesses in the succeeding years is important not as achievement but as symptom. The main constitutional change in the fourteenth century was the introduction of the burgesses first of all into the Council and later into Parliament during the reign of David II. This change was not inspired by any national movement for popular representation or by any new theory of the state but found its origin in an expedient to obtain money, principally for the purpose of paying the ransom of David II. The Third Estate was introduced at the beginning for special purposes and the representation was not continuous, but gradually it was accepted as a normal part of Parliament and from about 1367 the burgesses were regularly represented. This does not mean that all municipalities sent members to Parliament. For the most part only the Royal Burghs were represented although there were a few exceptions in the Ecclesiastical Burghs. Professor Rait has pointed out that the criterion of representation in the Scottish Parliament was land-tenure. Any town on the land of a baron would be represented by its Superior and would therefore have no authority for sending members to the Parliament. The Ecclesiastical Burghs of Glasgow, St. Andrews/

St. Andrews and Brechin are exceptions and their membership has been explained on other grounds. An examination of the Stent Rolls shows that the right to be represented was accompanied by the obligation to pay taxes but payment was no guarantee of the right to representation. Another condition of representation seems to have been membership of the Convention of Burghs and it is here that the explanation has been found for Parliamentary representation of burgesses from certain Ecclesiastical Burghs. The two main facts to be noted about this burgess representation are the lateness and irregularity of representation in the fourteenth century and the limitation of municipalities sending members. The weakness of the Third Estate was further emphasised by the absence of potential allies in the other two Estates. The lower clergy were represented at the beginning of the century but soon only those of that order who held some royal appointment were to be found in Parliament; the burgesses would not look for much help from the bishops, abbots and priors. In the Second Estate the lower orders, represented in the English Parliament by the knights of the shires, scarcely existed in the Scottish Parliament, for the lesser knights being usually younger members of powerful families were represented by their kinsmen overlords. The Third Estate under these circumstances/

circumstances could not be influential in directing the affairs of the country and when it is recalled that the burgh members represented the merchant class it appears that anything resembling a commoners' party did not exist. It is not intended to suggest however that the merchants were continually chafing at the dominion of the barons or prelates or that they were forbidden any legislation required for their business. Their interests never seemed to have been opposed to those of the other Estates; the merchants avoided where possible the antagonisms of baronial factions while the barons had nothing to gain from interference with the merchants. The amount of trade legislation passed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries suggests that little opposition was made to the proposals of the merchants while on the other hand there are no instances of any account of merchants intervening in baronial quarrels or in disputes between king and nobles. This freedom of the burgesses which undoubtedly contributed to the development of trade in these centuries was fostered by the Convention of Royal Burghs, a body which increased in importance throughout the fourteenth century.* The Third Estate in the fourteenth and/

*Its influence can be gauged from the following statement by Sir James Marwick: "Scarcely anything affecting the Burghs of Scotland in their internal administration, or in their commercial relations at home and abroad/

and fifteenth centuries really represented the Convention in Parliament, stood for its policy and sought to further its interests. The burgess members were expected to uphold resolutions and agreements previously made in the Convention and penalties were imposed on those who acted otherwise. For this reason burgesses were interested mainly in commercial affairs and took no great part in other matters of national importance. In these circumstances Parliament could not be the institution round which popular aspirations would centre. Apart from all other considerations these conditions made it certain that the future symbol of nationalism would be the Crown rather than the Mace. The fate of the Scottish Parliament as a popular

institution/

abroad, escaped the cognizance of the Convention. It defined the rights and privileges and duties of Burghs; it regulated the merchandise, manufactures and shipping of the country, it exercised control over the Scottish merchants in France, Flanders and other countries in Europe, with which from time to time commercial relations existed; it sent commissioners to foreign powers, and to great commercial communities, entered into treaties with them, and established the staple trade of Scotland wherever this could be most advantageously done; it claimed the right, independently of the Crown, to nominate the Conservator and it certainly did regulate his emoluments, and control his conduct; it sometimes defrayed, and sometimes contributed towards, the expenses of ambassadors from the Scottish Court to that of France and other foreign powers in matters affecting the Burghs and the common weal: it allocated among the whole Burghs of the Kingdom their proportion of all extents and taxes granted by the three Estates of the realm; it adjudicated on the claims of Burghs to be admitted to the privileges of free Burghs and to be added to its roll; it took cognizance of weights and measures."

institution was further settled by the practice of remitting questions to committees or commissions. In some instances, especially in the fourteenth century, full Parliamentary powers were given to these commissions which carried on the work of the parent assembly while the majority of the members went home to look after their local affairs. At other times committees were set up under obligation to report. The system of delegation was properly applied to judicial functions but in the fifteenth century when legislative powers were largely remitted to such a body as the Committee of the Articles, Parliament ceased, at least for the time being, to be of great importance in guiding the affairs of the country.

In the days of the Canmore Dynasty when the task set the rulers of Scotland was the welding of peoples and the stabilising of boundaries, successes had been won and held only by the strong monarchs. The record of advances and accessions belongs to the chronicles of the warrior kings who aided by the preoccupations of the English monarchs crushed faction at home and held the marches. The story of the developing nationalism in these years is compounded of raid and counter-raid, of rebellion and swift revenge; its setting is the field rather than the council-chamber or the/

the market place; its emblem is the sword rather than the pen; its achievement is in the physical realm rather than in the spiritual. But by the end of the thirteenth century territorial unification had been achieved and in the first half of the fourteenth century England's challenge of annexation had been successfully met. Up to the end of the fifteenth century the kings were mainly concerned in that conflict between king and baron which was fought out in almost every country in Europe. The drama of each reign has the same theme, arrives at practically the same conclusion; only the dramatis personnae are different. Once again success rested with the strong kings but the chronicles of their achievement in the field forms only a part of the record of developing nationalism. Other forces apart from Crown authority were at work in this shaping of a nation in the fifteenth century, forces which were strong enough to ensure success in spite of monarchial feebleness or baronial faction. The history of nationalism is no longer a simple tale of the strong arm and the firm hand, a story of adventurous conquest; the narrative becomes involved, strange threads are woven into its fabric.

What were the forces producing nationalism in the fifteenth century and to what extent did Scottish nationalism exist in that period? A chronological treatment of such a theme suited to the earlier history of Scotland when progress was dependent on the strength of the central authority is not possible at this later time when more general factors of increasing importance require to be taken into account. The method of examining the various factors and estimating their value will probably prove more profitable than that of chronological report.

In the preceding pages it has been shown that the Scottish Parliament developed during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but failed through a variety of circumstances to become a symbol of popular aspirations. The fifteenth century Acts some of which will be dealt with later are of first importance for our purposes but these Acts find their origin outside Parliament and that assembly acted largely as a recording device for resolutions and plans made elsewhere. Parliament then is not to be accounted one of the great factors in the creation of the nation, although it played a noteworthy part in later events in Scottish history. The Crown was left then as the only symbol of unity so far as the central authority

was concerned and it is necessary to estimate its importance as a factor. The early rulers of the House of Stuart lacked the essential qualities for guiding the destinies of their country. Enfeebled in health bodily and mentally they became mere instruments in the hands of their councillors who happily for Scotland regarded themselves as trustees rather than as owners. The dominating figure throughout the reigns of Robert III and even in the latter years of his father was Robert, later Duke of Albany, who during the period of his guardianship and subsequent Regency proved himself equal to the task of maintaining comparative peace at home and abroad. His popularity as well as his power left the position of the Crown one of considerable strength although the revolts during the regency of Murdoch revealed that the first of the Scottish Chaucerians was to be faced with a formidable task. It is not necessary here to go into details concerning the capture of the young Prince or his years of captivity. His earliest actions as king made it plain that his rule was to be marked by activity and determination such as had not been seen during the preceding hundred years. He realised that a strong baronial party was bound to be a danger to the Crown with its tradition of incompetence. The family of/

of Murdoch was first attacked and others hardly less notable suffered at his strong hand. His policy had the single aim of strengthening the Crown and as means to that end he used forfeiture of estate, arrest, and open war, together with well-planned legislation and the establishment of justice. It was the fate of the first James to alienate the sympathies of the people as well as the nobles during his lifetime and to earn a posthumous regard which may be estimated either by the ferocity with which his murder was avenged or by the kindlier measure of his place in the romances of his country. Much of his legislative work fell short of success through lack of executive power in the central authority but there can be no doubt that he left to his successor a much more powerful instrument for the enforcement of law than that to which he himself fell heir. This strengthening of the central authority is indeed his principal contribution to the development of his country. During the earlier years of the reign of James II it was made more plain than ever in Scotland that royal domination was the way of peace. The early quarrels between Sir Alexander Livingstone and Sir William Crichton for the possession of the young king were prelude to the grim struggle between the Douglas family and James which reached its height in the rash murder at Stirling. With amazing

vigour/

vigour the young king crushed a house that bade fair to be a rival to the Crown and for a period of five years sought to direct the country in the ways of peace through wise legislation, which forms a fitting sequel to the work of his father. If the reigns of James I and II uphold the proposition that a strong king brought prosperity, that of James III, amply maintains the converse. His reign, thanks to the enterprise of his predecessor and to the unhappy condition of England began under the most fortunate auspices for in the years of his minority the country had been skilfully guided by Bishop Kennedy. The withdrawal of the strong hand that controlled the barons led to the reappearance of faction. In spite of these quarrels in which one family at least, the Boyds, gained power and lost, success favoured James and he was able to extend his rule over the Border towns, the territories of the broken Lord of the Isles, and over Orkney and Shetland. The later and most tragic years of his reign found him in opposition to his brothers Albany and Mar and eventually his own folly and misgovernment led to the defeat and end at Sauchieburn. The reign of James IV though unhappy in its commencement and catastrophic in its ending saw a considerable accession of power to the central authority. Pains were taken to win over to the side of the young king the nobles who had supported/

supported his father and an Act of Indemnity was passed clearing the conspirators from guilt in the eyes of the people of Scotland (Acts of Parliament Vol.II p.230) and of neighbouring lands (Acts of Parliament Oct.17th 1488) Thereafter the only domestic affair that troubled the years of James IV in any noteworthy fashion was the discontent in the Western Isles. The king did not meet with complete success in his first encounter, with the Lord of the Isles but after a second and third attempt he finally reduced the last potent representative of that house and it is recorded that his former enemies were his eager supporters on the tragic field of Flodden. This final settlement is a token of that furthering of nationalism characteristic of the reign. The principal events throughout these years were however concerned more with foreign than with domestic affairs and it is during this period that we see Scotland playing a prominent part for the first time in the international life of Europe. The importance in international affairs was achieved not so much by the enterprise of the king as by chance, and it would scarcely have been attained but for the association of the Franco-Scottish Alliance. Ferdinand of Aragon saw in Scotland an undesired exception to the alliance of powers which he planned against France and it was with the purpose of gaining the friendship of Scotland/

Scotland that the Spanish Embassy was sent. The attempt failed and the country reverted to the traditional policy of supporting France. Through an alliance with his uncle King John, James was under obligation to give assistance to Denmark in her quarrels with Lubeck, Norway and Sweden but the benefits were one-sided and the later preoccupations of the Scottish king ended an agreement that had been of little value to his country. Naval adventures led him into conflict with Holland and Portugal. He obtained favours from the Court of Rome especially in the matter of appointment to benefices the nature of which shows that both king and Pope had regard for matters other than the spiritual well-being of Scotland. The esteem in which James was held brought him the title of "Protector of the Christian Religion". The story of his relations with England is concerned with three events, the adventures on behalf of Perkin Warbeck, the marriage with Margaret Tudor and Flodden. It is not necessary to deal with these in detail; the first had little to do with developing nationalism, the second was the recognition of Scottish sovreignty while the third in woeful manner provided a new common sentiment for the people. These excursions into the realm of international affairs on such a scale were of great importance in the development of national consciousness. Scotland was for the/

the first time finding a place in the new Europe and in the process was attaining a fuller awareness of Nationality*

In spite of occasional failures and of unpopular actions consisting mainly of tax impositions the kings throughout the fifteenth century gathered greater power than the Crown had possessed before. They had followed the same general policy of establishing authority over the barons by various means and with different degrees of success. They left the international prestige of their country higher than it had ever been before. The very continuance of their house in spite of the tragic fates which overtook its members was in itself/

*An interesting discussion of the Scottish King's attempts at absolutism in imitation of Henry VIII, Francis I and Charles V is contained in Hume Brown's "Surveys of Scottish History" p.26. Sir David Lyndsay in his "Complaynt of the Papyngo" has left a poetical record of the King's success at home and abroad in the following two stanzas:-

During his time, so justice did prevail,
The Savage Isles trembled for terror:
Eskdale, Erisdale, Liddlesdale and Annandale
Durst not rebel, doubting his dyntis dour;
And of his lords had such perfect favour;
So for to show, that he a-feared no fone,
Out through his realm he would ride him alone.

And of his court through Europe sprang the fame,
Of lusty lords and lovesome ladies ying,
Triumphant journeys, jousting, and knightly game,
With all pastime, according for a king;
He was the glove of princely governing,
Who, through the ardent love he had to France,
Against England did move his ordinance."

itself a considerable factor in the development of national consciousness. The Crown in the conflict with barons and in international activities could well be taken as the symbol of nationalism.

Intimately associated with the rise of royal authority in opposition to the barons and in international relationships was the accompanying development in the administration of justice. James I made so notable a contribution to this movement that he can be regarded as the founder of modern Scottish Law. Prior to his accession justice had been administered under consuetudinary law, a practice which left room for much vagueness. One of the earliest acts of the king was the setting up of a commission to determine which of the ancient laws were to be regarded as operative and to make these the beginning of Statutory Law. In addition to thus introducing a system James I took a most effective step towards the popular learning of laws by setting them out in Scots instead of Latin. A further substantiation of the claim that he was the founder of modern Scots Law is his introduction of the Court of Session. It is not to be imagined that this Court received its present form under the energetic monarch: even within the period under review its character was altered fundamentally and even then it did not resemble/

resemble closely the Court in its present form. Further changes in the administration of justice took place in the succeeding reign but they were not so far-reaching as those under James I, and consisted mainly of comparatively slight modifications of existing practice. Chief among these is the remodelling of the precursor of the Court of Session. The number of representatives was fixed at nine and it was arranged that two meetings should be held each year at certain places. The reign of James III with its conflict between King and barons saw a weakening of justice centrally and locally so that much work remained to be done by James IV. He had the double task of strengthening local and altering central administration.* The king was diligent in attendance at these courts and did his utmost to see that justice was administered in them. Testimony to the efficacy of his work was given by Don Pedro de Ayala "They have learnt

by/

*Writing concerning events in 1493 Boece in "Lines of Bishops of Murthlae and Aberdeed" declares "As King James had no trouble either at home or abroad, he turned his mind, chiefly by the advice of bishop William, to those matters which tended to the public welfare and honour. He restored the legal system (called the justice yre) which for some years had fallen into abeyance owing to the disorders of the times, so that proper punishment was meted out to thieves, robbers, murderers, violators, marauders, and all manner of disturbers of the public peace."

by experience that he executes the law without respect to rich or poor". His major problem in the local administration of justice was the extension of his system to the Highlands and Islands and in this difficult task he achieved considerable success. De Ayala writing of the inhabitants of the islands says: "They do not know what danger is. The present king keeps them in strict subjection. He is feared by the bad, and loved and revered by the good like a god. None of the former Kings have succeeded in bringing the people into such subjection as the present King. He went last summer to many of the islands, and presided at the Courts of Law." Another and more official record of the attempt at widening the range of justice is contained in an Act of Parliament of March 20, 1503 quoted in modern form "Because there has been great abuse of justice in the north parts and west parts of the realm, such as the North Isles and South Isles, for lack and fault of Justice Ayres, justices and sheriffs, through which the people are almost gone wild, it is therefore made statute and ordained for the quieting of the people by justice that there be in time to come justices and sheriffs deputed in these parts as after follows - that is to say, that the justices and sheriffs of the North Isles have their seat and place for administration of/

of justice in Inverness or Dingwall as the matters occur to be decerned by the said officers: and that another justice and sheriff be made and deputed for the South Isles and those parts and have his place and seat for administration of justice in Tarbet or at Loch Kinkeran, at the will and pleasure of the said officers, as the matters occur" etc. This extension of a scheme of local administration was seconded by developments in the central authority, which led to considerable alterations in the primitive Court of Session. Under the same date as that for the measure quoted above an Act was passed for the establishing of a Daily Council (Acts of Parl. Vol.II p.249).

The changes which have been discussed so far dealt with the organisation of courts and the extension of a system. An even more important work was the giving of vivifying energy to local and central administration. In the fifteenth century the passing of an Act of Parliament aiming at enhancing the prestige of a local authority carried with it no guarantee of the fulfilment of the intention. Much of the legislation lacked practical outcome simply on account of the weakness of the executive. The Courts suffered from this misfortune especially in the days of James III and their condition was improved only by the energy of his successor. It has been suggested that as

considerable/

considerable revenue accrued to the king from fines imposed in the justice ayre this royal enthusiasm sprang from motives other than love of country and devotion to justice. Whatever the motive and that is not our present concern, the result was an improvement in the administration of justice which produced an enhanced reputation for the king among the people and a greater measure of power for the Crown. The work of the rulers earlier in the century had not been in vain. James I and II differed from James IV not in aim but in opportunity and the whole period apart from the lapse in the reign of James III witnessed accessions to royal power through the strengthening of the administration of justice. The effect of all this on the development of the nation must have been considerable. Something noteworthy had been achieved when Northerner and Southerner began to look to the central authority for the safeguarding of themselves and their property against injustice.* The main point/

*In outlining the forces that tended towards unity in his account of "The Moulding of the Scottish Nation" Hume Brown says: "After the Church as a power tending to unity, is probably to be reckoned the administration of law and justice. When it was brought home to the Highlander that he must seek justice from Sheriffs' Courts at Dingwall and Tarbert and to the Lowlander that he must seek it in Edinburgh, Perth and Aberdeen, he realised that he was part of a great mechanism, with the working of which he must find himself in harmony. It was the misfortune of Scotland, however, that the royal judicatories were permanently enfeebled by a weak executive and thus was lost that confidence in a central source of justice which makes so large an element in what we call a national consciousness."

point to be recognised is that in the century under consideration this administration of law and justice had attained a degree of effectiveness never reached before and that the development which had taken place therein was due to the activity of the Crown rather than to the Legislature. Because the strengthening of the administration of justice was the result of royal effort the prestige of the Crown was undoubtedly increased but unfortunately precisely for the same reason the continuation of successful endeavour depended on a doubtful factor, the energy of succeeding kings.

The growing power of the central authority was aided by the break-down of the Feudal System. It was pointed out earlier that for two centuries the System had strengthened the Crown in the struggle between North and South but that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the barons ceased to play the part of upholders of the throne and aspired to be rivals. The success of the Crown in the later conflict was due rather to the energy of the kings than to weakness on the part of the barons consequent on the decline of Feudalism. The importance of the break-down of the System for the development of the nation does not consist in its effect on the conflict between king and baron/

baron. The question of whether or not the break-down meant a weakening in the baronial force of retainers has comparatively little to do with the present discussion. The main effect to be observed for the immediate purpose is that on the relationship between the people and the central authority. The System found its head in the king but it appears that even when Feudalism was most effective this leadership was nominal. The country was organised on the basis of local autonomy. Each village group under the feudal lord was self-supporting, gaining scanty aid from its neighbours and having little concern with anything but its own affairs. The Lord of the Manor was the embodiment of the legislature and the executive and the community life was circumscribed by the narrow limits of local affairs. The lack of relationship among the groups made national consciousness well-nigh impossible. No date can be given with any claim to accuracy for the decay of Feudalism in Scotland. The good relations that existed between people and overlord prevented any of the violent outbreaks such as occurred in France and England to mark the decline of the System. The following quotation of John Major's taken from "The Social and Industrial History of Scotland" illustrates the Scottish relationships. "They are so kindly/

kindly affected to their lords that 30,000 or 40,000 men will follow them at their own charges." It has been pointed out that the War of Independence hastened if it did not cause the process and it has been suggested that the changes in land tenure at the beginning of the fifteenth century had probably a considerable effect. It seems fairly certain that by the reign of James II serfdom was a thing of the past. The central authority began to play a greater part in the lives of the common people and although certain aspects of the intervention were highly unpopular the principal effect was the making possible of a nation through the decline of the exclusive autonomy of the small area.

A similar process originating in different sources broke down the exclusiveness of the towns. There was a strong tendency for the Royal burghs to retain their original privileges exclusively and to look with great disfavour on the pretensions of burghs of barony. Indeed the changes that took place in the towns scarcely affected the original privileges of the burghs for the main tendency was towards increase in number rather than alteration in character of the Royal burghs. The sharing of privileges with rising townships deprived the older burghs of their sense of close monopoly and thus the separating influences associated/

associated with the mediaeval towns lost potency. These changes were not so important for developing nationalism as those in rural areas simply because the principal towns had been bound explicitly to the Crown whereas the feudal bonds with the throne in the rural areas were less significant popularly than those with a manorial overlord. The intermediary overlord in rural areas had appeared a much m more important person than the ultimate overlord in the days when the central authority played a small part in the lives of the people; when that part increased with the strengthening of the Crown, the time was approaching for organising government on the wider basis of the nation. In the towns the change was less obvious simply because in the many important instances of the Royal burghs, the intermediary had either not existed or was a specially appointed servant of the king who claimed no personal rights over the towns in his stewardship.

Considerable changes had taken place in commerce and industry since the time of Alexander III. Much was lost during the War of Independence for which the material gains of the moment of success afforded insufficient recompense and indeed the prosperity of the late thirteenth century did not return again till after the Union of Parliaments. This long period of depression was not due entirely or even mainly/

mainly to the losses of the War of Independence nor did it last throughout the centuries without variation. The absence of strife at home and abroad under a powerful central authority such as that in the days of James IV produced a time of prosperity which was almost as great as that in the days of the Alexanders but even when faction divided the nobles and failure stamped every venture across the Border, the trade and commerce of the country continued and even developed. During the darkest days of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it is not difficult to see signs of prosperity and even luxury among the trading classes. An example frequently quoted is that of the increasing proportions paid by the burghers during this period. Cochran-Patrick gives the following account in his "Mediaeval Scotland":

"When James I returned from his captivity in England in 1424 his ransom, decently veiled under the name of "costage" was fixed at 60,000 marks of English standard money, to be paid in six yearly payments of 10,000 marks but the last annual instalment was to be repaid as the dowry of the Queen. Of this large sum the burghs undertook to pay two-fifths, the other two Estates raising the remaining three-fifths. This affords us some idea of the comparative wealth of the different classes of population in/

in Scotland at this period, and shows the progress made by the commercial interest since the middle of the fourteenth century, when their proportion of special taxes was only one-fifth, the barons paying one-half and the clergy three-tenths". The sumptuary laws of the period give further confirmation of the wealth of the burgher class even in times that are not recorded as prosperous.

The fifteenth century is not by any means rich in documents concerning the state of industry and commerce but such as do exist reveal conditions much more stable and conductive to development than would be expected from the political history of the country. The Franco-Scottish Alliance led to extensive trading with France, the principal imports being wines and fruits and the exports salt and the usual raw materials, wool, and skins. This commercial advantage was counter-balanced by the conflicts into which the Alliance led Scotland often to the disadvantage of the country. Trade with the Scandinavian countries and with Prussia, Poland and Danzig was considerable in amount but more business was done with Flanders and the Low Countries. The Anglo-Flemish Alliance caused interruption in trade with Flanders and a shifting of the staple but in general trade was carried on to mutual profit. The export consisted of wool, a little cloth, furs/

furs and fish. From Bruges which was the staple centre during part of the fifteenth century, Scotland imported luxuries of such a nature as only wealthy burghers or nobles could buy. "The Scottish Staple at Veere" (Davidson and Gray), contains the following. "From Bruges they bought in return whatever articles of luxury or of refinement they could afford to buy - the inevitable drugs and spices, the finer cloths and embroidery, the gold and silver work for which gorgeous church ceremonial created some demand, sometimes wheat and provisions and to a large extent the wines in general use. Bruges was then for Flanders the chief market for the wines of France, Spain and Portugal, brought by sea, as well as for those on the Rhine and of Italy, brought overland". Acts were passed safeguarding the interests of foreign trades coming to Scotland and various attempts were made to stimulate commence especially when it involved the sending of goods rather than money out of the country. In 1454 an Act was passed with the purpose "that strangers that bring in victuals be favourably treated and thoroughly paid for the victuals". This Act was strengthened under James III. in 1482. The various documents such as The Treasurers 'Accounts', Halyburton's ledger and the records of the Convention of Royal Burghs, give the impression that considerable trade was carried on by a prosperous merchant class which possessed initative as well/

well as a sense of national dignity. Commerce at home was restricted by the jealously guarded privileges of the Royal burghs but the rise of the burghs of barony led to an extension of home trade even in spite of hampering conditions.

The record of industrial development does not tell the same story of progress. The burghers of Scotland were content to make profit from commerce rather than from industry and the accepted practice was to export raw material and import manufactured goods. The industry that did exist met the main simple needs of the community and made little effort at providing merchandise for a foreign market. The merchant guilds regarded craftsmen as their social inferiors and did not even see that the crafts could contribute to their economic welfare. "They persistently put obstacles in the way of industrial development at home. They fought a long and losing fight to keep down the craftsman, for whom every kind of ambition involved the renunciation of his craft" (Davidson and Gray). A similar attitude recorded by John Major was to be found in the rural areas. "The farmers have further this fault; that they do not bring up their sons to any handicraft. Shoemakers, tailors and all such craftsmen they reckon as contemptible and unfit for war and they therefore/

therefore bring up their children to take service with the great nobles, or with a view to their living in the country in the manner of their fathers". The indifference or hostility to industrial development was not shared by Parliament and during the fifteenth century especially in the later decades several enactments were recorded dealing with questions that are familiar to our own age. Notable among these is the Act of 1425 (quoted by Hume Brown in his "Scotland from before 1700 from Contemporary Documents") dealing in strong-handed fashion with the problem of unemployment. "Idlers. The king with consent of his parliament has statute and ordained that each sheriff of the realm within his baillery inquire diligently of any idle men that have not of their own to live upon be reset within the land after the said inquisition; the sheriff shall cause to be arrested such idle men and cause them to be kept in durance till it be known on what they live and that the country suffer not scathe from them. And therefore the said sheriff shall receive good and sure burrowis; after the which burrowis found, the sheriff shall assign forty days to such idle men to get them masters or to apply themselves to lawful crafts. And these forty days being gone, if they be found still idle, the sheriff shall arrest them again and send them to the king's prison to wait and be punished at the king's will; and that this be done as/

as well in burghs as landwards through all the realm." In the following year an Act was passed imposing penalties for failure to fulfil contracts and arranging for the completion of work. Vagrancy received further attention in the ~~next~~ two succeeding reigns while unemployment in the reign of James IV led to the passing of an Act for the building and manning of a greater fishing fleet. Burghs were to be compelled to build fishing boats which were to be manned by "stark idle men" with or without their consent. These attempts on the part of the legislature had little to do with the development of industry during the fifteenth century. Parliament did not recognise the importance of encouraging manufactures as a means for the reduction of vagrancy.

During the reign of James IV some new industries were established, generally as Crown monopolies, and remembering the curious exploring mind of the king these are not to be accounted for wholly as means for augmenting the revenue. Among the most significant was printing, a monopoly for which was granted by James in 1507 to Walter Chapman and Andrew Myller of Edinburgh. An industry which received great impetus from the personal interests of the king was shipbuilding. His navy comprised at one time no less than 26 vessels including the "Great Michael" about which the Pitscottie Chron. says/

ways "for this ship was of so great stature, and took so much timber, that, except Falkland, she wasted all the woods in Fife, which were oakwood, over all the timber that was gotten out of Norway." The exhaustion of the Scottish oakwoods impelled James to write to Louis XII of France and to John of Denmark (Epistolae Regum Scotorum Vol.I). What industry did exist seems to have prospered towards the end of the century as can be seen from the improvement in wages noted incidentally in The Exchequer Rolls. The true situation is well summed up in Ayala's letter to Ferdinand. "The Scots are not industrious and the people are poor. They spend all their time in wars, and when there is no war they fight with one another. It must however be observed that since the present King succeeded to the throne they do not dare to quarrel so much with one another as formerly, especially since he came of age. They have learnt by experience that he executes the law without respect to rich or poor. I am told that Scotland has improved so much during his reign that it is worth three times more than formerly, on account of foreigners having come to the country and having taught them how to live. They have more meat, in great and small animals, than they want, and plenty of wool and hides.

Spaniards/

Spaniards who live in Flanders tell me that the commerce of Scotland is much more considerable now than formerly, and that it is continually increasing. There is as great a difference between the Scotland of old time and the Scotland today as there is between bad and good."

Commerce gained considerable and industry slight attention from Parliament, while agriculture obtained an intermediate place as a good second. The agricultural acts throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries might be grouped in three divisions dealing with prevention of damage to crops, compulsory tillage, and security of leasehold. Thus Acts were passed in 1366 and in 1481 prohibiting the king's officers from damaging hay in the fields by riding over them and Froissart makes it clear that the peasants were not at all disposed to permit others to trample their crops. Several Acts were passed for the destruction of rooks and other birds suspected of doing damage. Tillage was made compulsory during the reign of James I each labourer being required to be the joint owner of an ox, or to dig seven feet of ground per day, or pay a fine amounting to the price of an ox.

Acts belonging to approximately the same class were those directed towards the planting of woods and hedges, the most/

most notable being that of 1447. Insecurity was the dread of agricultural tenants in the middle ages and the elimination of this evil was the aim of a noteworthy Act in 1449 which made illegal the eviction of a tenant and the breaking of the lease when the land was sold. Other miscellaneous Acts deal with the threshing of corn, stealing greenwood and breaking orchards, destroying dovecots and rabbit warrens, the breeding of horses, the slaying of wolves and the impounding for debt of horses, cattle and agricultural implements. From this brief summary it will be observed that the central authority did not shrink from intruding into the lives of the people and playing a guiding and impelling part. While the conditions ~~are~~ were entirely different from those that presently prevail, there is a great similarity in the readiness to apply what is usually called state interference. Behind these regulations was the belief that the community could be served through the activity of the central authority; they gave recognition to the idea that even for certain social purposes the wide area of the country was the proper unit of administration. It is true that executive power did not exist to support the legislature but the idea of government serving the individual in his private enterprises had emerged and that was one of the prime requirements of nationhood.

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This development of state interference passed beyond economic spheres and touched even the recreation and social life of the people. A conspicuous example is the Act of 1436 dealing with Drinking in Towns - "The king and the Three Estates have ordained that no man in burghs be found in t. taverns at wine, ale or beer after the stroke of nine o'clock, and the bell that shall be rung in the said burgh - the which being sounded, the aldermen and baillies shall put them in the King's prison, the which, if they do not, they shall pay for each time that they be found culpable before the chamberlain one shilling." Legislation was passed "that football and golf be utterly cried down and abused" (1447) and that archery might be practised instead." Restrictions were passed dealing with food, travelling accommodation etc., while municipal statutes laid down conditions for many popular amusements.

Education was one of the major concerns of social legislation the most important Statute being that of 1496. "It is statute and ordanit throw all the realme, that all borrowis and freholdaris, that ar of substance put their eldest sonnis and airis to the sculis fra thai be aucht or nyne yeiris of age, and till remane at the grammar sculis, quhill thai be competentli foundit and haue perfite latyne. And thereftir to/

to remane thre yeris at the sculis of art and Jure, sae that thai may haue knowlege and understanding of the lawis. Throw the quhilkis Justice may reigne universalie throw all the realme: Sae that thai that ar Shereffis or Jugeis Ordinaris under the kingis kienes, may haue knowlege to do Justice, that the pure pepill suld haue na neid to seik our souerane lordis principale auditours for ilk small Injure: and quhat baroun or freholder of substance, that holdis mocht his sone at the sculis, as said is, haifand na lauchfull essonye, but failyeis heirin, fra knowlege may be gotten thairof, he shall pay to the king the sum of 20 li." (Acts of Parliament (Scot) Vol.II p.238).

It should not be assumed that although this is the first national Education Act that there was not comparatively adequate provision for schooling prior to this time. Schools had been associated with the parishes, monasteries and cathedrals in varying degree since the late eleventh century and there are ample records of activity throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is possible to reconstruct with fair accuracy the curricula in the various types of schools in the later middle ages and to assess the work that was done. All that need be said here is that compared with other countries which were much more prosperous Scotland/

Scotland was well served by these early schools. But if it is wrong to assume that no provision was made for schooling prior to 1496 it would be equally erroneous to conclude that a nation-wide efficient system of education was established by the Statute. The Act was restricted socially in its application and it has been suggested that its effectiveness was restricted by being hortative rather than legislative." (Strong "History of Secondary Education in Scotland" p.32). Its effectiveness was limited also by that lack of executive power which has already been noted and it is no great wonder that John Major in his History of Greater Britain (Vol.X Scottish Historical Society, p.48) should complain firstly of the trends among the nobility and secondly of the state of education among the aristocracy. "The second fault I note is this: The gentry educate their children neither in letters nor in morals - no small calamity to the state. They ought to search out men learned in history, upright in character, and to them entrust the education of their children so that even in tender age these may begin to form right habits, and act when they are mature in years like men endowed with reason." The important point for the present is that the definite ultimate purpose of the Act was the training of men for the highest social service, the administration of justice. In this piece of legislation the breadth of mind characteristic/

characteristic of the fourth James is evident. The Act reveals also that readiness on the part of the central authority to tackle the social problems of the day. The fifteenth century would be noteworthy in educational annals if only for the provision of the first national enactment but its importance is greatly enhanced when it is remembered that during these years three out of the four Scottish Universities were founded, St. Andrews in 1411, Glasgow in 1450 and Aberdeen in 1494. It is true that these universities were small and that at least one existed rather than thrived for the first century of its history but their creation is to be regarded as a sign of the stirring in national consciousness. Prior to the fifteenth century Scottish students had gone abroad and in Paris and elsewhere had a reputation for scholastic ability as well as for poverty and pride. The founding of the first university was delayed by the wars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and while inter-city jealousy played its part in the subsequent rise of three institutions the principal causes of their being are to be found in the cultural revival which was part of a European movement and in the developing nationalism in which the provision of home universities became a desire and eventually an achievement.

If/

If we add the introduction of printing to the other educational developments, the fifteenth century becomes unique in preparing for the spreading of culture. Here was a community becoming interested in the affairs of the mind, consolidating and developing its gains at home, enhancing its position abroad, showing unmistakable signs of new vigour. Hume Brown in his "Early Descriptions of Scotland" pp.19-20 discussing the social legislation of the fifteenth century writes thus: "From the general histories of the period we carry away the impression that during the fifteenth century settled comfort and ideal interests were a moral impossibility. If, on the other hand, we have regard to the legislation of the period and at the same time take account of the national spirit as expressed in literature, we arrive at somewhat different conclusions. From the following Acts of Parliament of Scotland, mainly passed during the fifteenth century, we derive the impression of an energetic community, fully alive to its own interests, enjoying a fair degree of material prosperity, and already plagued with those parasitic growths that inevitably adhere to the progressive social organism. In these days, indeed, when the limits of State legislation is the question of questions, it is curious to read in these Acts how boldly the Scottish Estates put their finger on such matters as private/

private contracts, the rearing of crops, rates of charge, and the like.

If these Acts prove that the country was really quickened by the spirit of industrial progress, the literature of the time bears equally strong testimony to the existence of a body of cultivated opinion. When poets like James I, in the earlier half of the century, and Henryson in the latter half - both, be it said, so nobly distinguished by their mental delicacy and conscious art - when such poets could find an audience, however limited, we have conclusive attestation to the fact that there was a higher consciousness in the nation than its mere external history would lead us to suppose."

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Scottish nationalism was non-existent at the beginning of the fourteenth century but at the end it is easy to find evidences of its coming. The growing power of the central authority, increasing prosperity in commerce and industry, more efficient administration of justice, organisation of the ecclesiastical system, and above all a heritage of achievement against England all combined from the end of the fourteenth century throughout the fifteenth to produce an awakening of national consciousness. This movement had many results but none was finer or of more lasting worth than the emergence of a group of national poets.

The second part of this discussion is concerned with the literary development of Scotland and the major contention is that the work of the "Scottish Chaucerians" fits naturally into the scheme. No attempt is made to deny Chaucerian influences but a true description of the rise of these Scottish poets can only be given when it is remembered that their origin is most certainly not accounted for in the theory of Southern imitation. It is necessary then to trace as closely as possible the course of literature prior to the coming of the Scottish Chaucerians.

The history of Scottish Literature is not the history of literature written in Scotland. In the earliest stages

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and again frequently in the later, Scottish poets and prose writers show no patriotic or national bias in theme or style and pay homage sometimes in the most servile fashion to English masters. Prior to the fourteenth century no work of literary value exists which can be proved conclusively to be Scottish and it is surely significant that in the lengthy arguments which have taken place regarding the ascription of fourteenth century and even early fifteenth century works to Scottish poets no occasion has arisen for appealing to the nature of the subject or manner of treatment as proof of Scottish origin. Although he placed the beginning of Scottish poetry somewhat late, Professor Nichol's excellent review ("A Sketch of Scottish Poetry up to the time of Sir David Lyndesay, with an outline of his works" from the introduction to Lyndesay's Minor Poems) contains a succinct statement of the truth regarding nationalism in earlier and later Scottish work. "Scottish literature properly speaking, that is to say the literature which was not only written in Scotland but which introduced local ideas in local language, stretches over somewhat more than one hundred and fifty years. It begins in the fourteenth century with Lyndesay and Knox in the advocacy of religious freedom. The Scotchmen who have written from the time of Drummond/

Drummond to that of Carlyle have been, with a few exceptions and in spite of certain local characteristics essentially English writers." Whatever literature was produced in Scotland before the fourteenth century is indistinguishable from Northern English work from the points of view of philology and style as well as from that of patriotism. It is not necessary to seek far afield for an explanation of this absence of nationalism. Even in the days of Alexander III no strong sense of exclusive community had developed in Scotland as a whole, nor even in the Lowlands had there grown up a feeling of separation from the people across the Border. War had become the normal condition in the Debatéable Land from the Solway to the Tyne and it was thought no great crime for the noble holding lands in either country to transfer his allegiance at will. Before a national literature could evolve it was necessary that national institutions should arise round which might develop feelings of regard for those inside the community and of partial separation from those outside. So long as absorption into England remained a possibility, no national literature could be produced. When it appeared that the country was to take its own course, the way was clear for the coming of a literature that would be Scottish. The proof of this contention has a negative and a positive aspect. Negatively, the comparative absence of Scottish traits/

traits in the work of the ~~pre~~-fourteenth century poets upholds the thesis that something was lacking in the conditions necessary for the production of national literature, Positively, the gradual development of Scottish traits co-ordinated with the rise of nationalism is so striking in parallelism as to afford as much proof as can be obtained in such matters of the inter-dependence of the poetic and national movements.

There are exceptions to the generalisation that no popular Scottish poetry existed prior to the production of Barbour's "Brus" but these are small in quantity, few in number, and their importance lies not in their intrinsic worth but in the significance which they assume in the light of subsequent developments. All are contained in fragmentary folk songs which belong to a few decades preceding Barbour's lifetime. Listed by every historian of Scottish literature they have met with even scantier critical treatment than in their meagreness they have deserved. The popular cries and sayings in verse are all marked with an odd barbarity whose gusto is typically Scottish. These are not the mere jingle of a primitive people; all of them have strongly marked rhythm and show their association with the dance, but all are characterised by verve of language and sufficiency of emotion that lift them above the level of primitive verse. Four examples/

examples have been found. The first one takes as its subject a lament for Scotland during the troubled days that followed the death of Alexander III and the Maid of Norway. The contrast between the peace of the country in the days of that monarch and the strife which followed in the interregnum was great enough to produce a wave of emotion throughout the people.

"When Alisander oure king was dede
That Scotland led in love and le
Alway was sons of ale and brede,
Of wine and wax, of gamyn and gle:
Oure gold was changed unto lede.
Christ born into virginite
Succour Scotland and remede
That stad is in perplexite

(Wyntoun's Cronykil end of Bk.VII)

The second example shows more virility and verve. A single verse has been preserved in Fabyan's Chronicle in which the Scots mock at Edward for his failure to overcome their forces. Edward had laid seige to Berwick in 1296 but had been driven back after his forces had sustained considerable injury.

"What wenis King Edward with longe shankys
To have wonne Berwick all our onthankys?
Gaas pykes him
And when he hath it
Gaas dykeis him."

No one can fail to perceive the strength of the emotion of the refrain. There is an abandon in this verse that belongs peculiarly to Scottish poetry; the Scottish Chaucerians/

Chaucerians have it and it is possessed by Fergus~~o~~on, and Burns. There is a spontaneity about Scottish poetry that can only live where there is an atmosphere of sincere emotion. W.B. Yeats said recently that Burns restored that spontaneity by singing the praises of Drink and the Devil. Whether we think that Drink and the Devil are worth praising is a matter of no literary importance but it is clear that the fame of Burns rests on the spontaneity and sincerity of feeling with which he did sing. These are the qualities that are to be found in these early verses. In the third example, there are found traces of another quality of Scottish poetry, its grim humour.

"Maydens of Englande, sore may ye morne
For your lemmans ye have loste at Bannockisborne;
With heve a lowe
What wenyth the Kynge of Englande
So soone to have wonne Scotlande?
With rumbylowe."

There is in this verse a promise at least of that peculiar trait in the Scottish poets which appears in the gruesome familiarity they display with Death and the powers of Darkness. The last example is a four line satire on the English ~~mode~~ noble on the occasion of the marriage of David II to a sister of the English king.

"Long bordys, hartles,
Paynted hoodyes, witles
Gay cotis, graceless,
Maketh England, thryftles."

Two/

Two qualities of Scottish poetry are displayed in this short verse. The first is satire of a somewhat roguish character. It may be the result of national pride that the Scot has acquired fame for his power of looking at or rather looking down at his enemy with a withering eye. It is characteristic that what is attacked is the hypocrisy rather than the lack of strength of the enemy. The second quality is a facility in making derogatory epithets for the object of contempt, a gift with which Dunbar was specially endowed.

It is certain from references in the chronicles that verses of this nature existed in considerable quantity and enjoyed much popularity. These fragments may be taken as witnesses of the existence of a body of folk poetry at the beginning of the fifteenth century. This poetry is rude and primitive yet it possesses the characteristics of the later makars and poets of Scotland. Whatever charge is made, it will never be accused of lack of spontaneity or emotion nor will it be called artificial or typically mediaeval. It is important to notice that these verses dealt with the great events in the national life of the country in ways that were to become distinctive for Scotland. Scanty though the records are, they prove that some poetic genius/

genius existed at this time and found opportunity for the expression of emotion in spite of the calamities which befell the country.*

It is not to be assumed that these verses though they do represent the remnant of folk poetry, were the only products of literary talent in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. The rude verses have characteristics in common with the later poetry which lead us to conclude that the Scottish Chaucerians started not far from where the folk poets left off. The other work of the time affords an excellent contrast for the folk poetry. At this early stage in the history of Scottish literature the romance habit which was common to mediaeval Europe took hold of Scotland. A group of versifiers arose who produced or rather reproduced the typical poetry of the middle ages. Apart from the language and unimportant intimate tricks of style, the tales might quite well have been/

*"Scottish Vernacular Literature", T.F.Henderson: "Altogether the fragments form but a sorry wreckage from devouring Time; but, such as they are they do more to bring us into contact with the heart of the nation, in these wild and ingenuous ages than do the bulk of the various political documents of the period. In those early times the carols and rounds and rude rhymes were almost the only means of voicing the nation's sentiments, and formed a sort of presage of our present daily press. On the other hand, the more elaborate poems scarcely touched the present at all. In the long Romances we have passing glimpses of ancient manners and customs, but they make known little or nothing of the main concerns of the nation; they are mainly translations, or paraphrases of translations, and/

been composed in England or France. They have no national traits either in idea or expression and the writers are absorbed in the gests that were the stock-in-trade of the poets of Western Europe. It would be difficult even by minute examination of these romances to find in them the promise of a vernacular literature that was to be national and intensely emotional. Indeed in reviewing the history of our literature the admission of these poets as founders is made on the ground of linguistic rather than literary qualities. These romance writers wrote usually in stanza forms frequently of great complexity but a small group maintained the alliterative tradition in the early fourteenth century and revived it in the middle of the fifteenth. The assignment of much of this work falls far short of certainty, and difficulty is frequently encountered in settling even the time and place of authorship.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century it is probable that poetry in Scotland whether of home or foreign origin consisted of popular sayings dealing with important events or with local happenings, and romances usually translated. For the most part, the poets of the time produced one or other/

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and deal with times already remote from those of the narrator, and with adventures in love and war of heroes belonging to a partly mythical antiquity."

other of these types but curiously enough, the first of the Scottish poets has been credited with attempts at both. Thomas of Erceldoune has provided not a few literary and biographical problems to test the wit of modern scholarship; in spite of the great ingenuity which has been employed in attempting to discover the facts, the product consists of a modicum of certainty in a mass of conjecture. Little purpose would be served here by discussing the views of Scott, Hazlitt, Irving, Wasson, Garnett, Wright, Murray, Miller, McNeill, Kobling and Halliwell on Thomas the Rimour and on each other; this incomplete list in itself is an indication of the controversial nature of the poet's biography and literary achievement. It is generally admitted that Thomas was either the writer of prophecies yet unfulfilled or written after the event, or the refurbisher of earlier prophecies. At all events he took some considerable part in creating or forming sayings which passed into popular tradition and many of these dealt with national events. In subsequent years additions to the prophecies were made to such an extent that it is now impossible to prove any one prophecy to be the work of Thomas himself. The famous "Romance and Prophecies" belongs a century after the death of Thomas and it is just possible that this poem contains a nucleus of the old poet's work. The ballad which serves/

serves as introduction to the prophecies is undoubtedly late in its earliest surviving form but again it is possible that it contains some original work. It is characteristic of this stage in the development of Scottish poetry that the work of Thomas of Erceldoune was known in England at least as well as in Scotland. A prophecy of Southern origin concerning the course of the War of Independence proclaiming the many disasters which would befall the Scots was attributed to Thomas of Erceldoune, an indication that the English had considerable faith in the Scottish Merlin especially when he appeared to foretell Southern victories. This regard on both sides of the Border lasted for a considerable time and a reference to the prophecies is made in Barbour's "Brus". A letter was brought to the Bishop telling him of the slaying of the Red Comyn.

"The lettir tauld him all the deid
And he till his men gert it reid
And aythyn said thaim, "sekyrly
I hop Thomas prophecy
Off herisdoune sall weryfyd be
In him; for swa our lord help me!.
I haiff gret hop he sall be king
And haif this land all in leding."

Reference is also made in the "Wallace." In a famous incident Harry the Minstrel makes Thomas the Rymour play a patriot's part. Wallace had been made prisoner at Ayr, starved until his gaolers thought him dead, and thrown upon a "draff myddyn"/

Myddyn". His old nurse appeared and begged permission to give the body decent burial; to her astonishment the hero was not dead. Thomas the Rymour on being informed makes a prophecy.

"Than thomas said: "Forsuth, or he decess,
Mony thousand in feild sall mak thar end.
Off this regioune he sall the sothroun send;
And Scotland thriss he sall bryng to the pess;
So gud off hand agayne sall neuir be kend." *

For our present purpose all that need be noted is that the work of Thomas of Erceldoune was closely allied to the folk poetry of the early fourteenth century. The only new quality which he added was the oracular mystery of things "sayd in derne", as Wyntoun puts it. In the troubled days which followed the death of the soothsayer it was no wonder that his portentous declarations assumed an appearance of veracity. There would be ample occasion for fitting the misfortunes of the time to whatever was gloomy in his prophecies, while his more hopeful revelations would be readily seized as anticipations of happier times. Whether or not we should attribute to him that ability to read the signs of the times which distinguishes the prophet in all generations is difficult to say. Dr. Murray may well be

right/

*References also appear in Wyntoun and "Scalacronica" while as late as 1745 a prophecy attributed to him was regarded as a portent of Jacobite success.

right in his estimate. "As a patriot, and one who had lived during the palmy days of the old Scottish monarchy before

"Alysandyr owre king was dede
That Scotland led in luve and le,"

he must have keenly felt the sorrows which overtook his country in his last years, and if he understood the temper of his countrymen, he may well have expressed his hope and confidence of their final triumph in tones which fell from the lips of the "old man eloquent" with all the weight of inspiration." (Dr.J.A.H.Murray "The Romance & Prophecies of Thomas of Erceldoune", Introduction p.XVI). The truth may lie with Sir Walter Scott who regards his prophetic masterpiece as a misunderstood and erroneous weather forecast. He says that what the story amounts to is that "Thomas presaged to the Earl of March that the next day would be windy -,the weather proved calm, but news arrived of the death of Alexander III, which gave an allegorial turn to the prediction, and saved the credit of the prophet. ('Border Minstrelsy")

Much controversy has raged round the ascription of the romance of Sir Tristrem to Thomas of Erceldoune. The internal evidence with its references in the third person to the old poet is capable of other interpretations than that Thomas was really the author while the testimony of Robert Mannying/

Mannyng of Brune is no more conclusive. Until the publication of the poem by the Scottish Text Society with George P.McNeil as editor the tendency was to attribute "Sir Tristrem" to an unknown poet who worked on a French original and who sought to gain attention for his work by replacing the French Thomas of his original by Thomas of Erceldoune. (Professor Kölbing quoted in the Scottish Text Society Introduction "Sir Tristrem" says, "With regard to the opinion of Sir Walter Scott that Thomas of Erceldoune is the author of the English poem, I simply concur in the view that, when the unknown author of the poem found the name of a Thomas who was not further designed in the French work before him, he adduced the celebrated Thomas of Erceldoune as an authority for his information, in order to ensure a livlier interest for the work among his countrymen. Yet as such a manipulation would hardly have taken place during Thomas's life, we have to assume that he had died a short time previously; and although Robert Mannyng ascribed Sir Tristrem to Thomas of Erceldoune, we need not regard that as any independent testimony to his authorship; the chronicler as above remarked, was doubtless acquainted with the beginning of the romance and merely took his information from that source." McNeil has reverted to the earlier opinion that Thomas of Erceldoune was the pret.)

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The matter depends on whether or not Mannyng had certain independent authority in ascribing the poem to Thomas of Erceldoune. It is true that his description of the poem fits that work even although the praise is generous but was he following his own assured knowledge or did he accept the figment of the unknown Scottish author? No definite answer can be given to the question and we are forced to agree with McNeil's admission that "the available evidence of the authorship of Sir Tristem is so slender that its consideration results almost necessarily in controversy rather than in conviction."

For the present purpose it is worth while noting that this work is undistinguished by any Scottish traits either in subject or style; indeed it may have been produced in Northern England. The story is a straightforward one, simply told but with a tendency to digression. In the eleven line stanza which is fairly complicated alliteration is frequently employed. The short motion of the lines becomes monotonous, a fault particularly unfortunate in a work of more than three thousand lines.

Mystery surrounds the next of the Scottish romancers and has made him a much more fontroversial subject than Thomas of Erceldoune. Recent research has modified older opinions/

opinions regarding the Huchowne canon to such a degree as to make necessary a re-examination of the whole field of fourteenth century literature associated with the North. Usually in recent years when alterations have been made in the ascriptions of mediaeval poems the result has consisted in proving that the conjectures of early critics were erroneous, but difficulty has frequently been encountered in attributing the work to another author. What has happened is that the perfecting of philological and other techniques has shown the error of many conjectures but the absence of conclusive evidence, especially in the poetry of Scotland, has made it difficult to give ascriptions and has added to the mass of anonymous work. Recent studies of Huchowne have not followed this tendency but have resulted in the attribution to the northern romancer of a considerable number of poems hitherto considered as of doubtful or unknown authorship.

The starting point for discussions of the Huchowne canon is the reference in Wyntoun where he names him as the author of "his Geat Hystoriable" and later on amplifies his statement (11.4321-32)

"And/

"And men of gud discretyowne
Sald excuse and love Huchowne,
That cunnand was in literature.
He made the Gret Gest off Arthure
And the Awntyre off Gawane
The Pystyll als off Swete Susane.
He was curyus in hys style,
Fayre off facund and subtille,
And ay to plesans and delyte
Made in metyre mete his dyte,
Lytill or nowcht newyrtheles
Waverand fra the suthfastness."

No difficulty has been experienced in identifying the "Pystyll of Swete Susane" and the critics almost without exception identify the "Gest Hystoriable" as the "Morte Arthur". The identity of the author has been complicated by references in Dunbar's Lament for the "Makaris".

"The gude Sir Hew of Eglyntoun
Et eik Heryot et Wyntoun
He has tane out of this cuntre;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Clerk of Lament eik he has tane
That maid the anteris of Gawane."

When it is remembered that Wyntoun's reference describes Huchowne as "of the Awle Ryale", a term whose meaning is not known with certainty, it will readily appear that the task of deciding whether the three names belong to one, two, or three people is not without difficulty. The tracing of the rise and fall of the various theories concerning the identity of the poet or poets named in these references lies outwith the scope of this present study although that would be/

be a task worth undertaking if only for the revelation of ingenuity displayed by the critics. We shall omit any discussion of the theories advanced by Pinkerton, Macpherson, Sibbald, Chalmers, Laing, Madden, Morris and even Trautmann, although he deserves more attention than his predecessors, and see what the most recent scholars have to say regarding this "shadowy poet". Our principal purpose in so doing is to discover what modern scholarship has to say concerning the Huchowne canon rather than to trace the significance of the reference in Wyntoun and Dunbar.

Amours in his edition of Scottish Alliterative Poems regards the "Morte Arthure" as the "Gest Hystorialle" and the "Awntyrs of Arthure" as the "Awntyrs of Gawane". He is not prepared to add to the list of poems which he believes to be the work of Huchowne and apart from the attribution of the "Awntyrs of Arthur" he accepts Dr. Trautmann's account which suggests one author for "Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight" and the "Alliterative Poems", another for the "Destruction of Troy" and another for "Golagros and Gawane". Amours is of the opinion that Sir Hew of Eglintoun was the Huchowne of Wyntoun's reference but affirms that he was a churchman and not the noble of that name who has usually been accepted as the subject of Dunbar's reference. Henderson approves of the attribu-

tions/

attributions upheld by Amours but throws considerable doubt on the identifying of Sir Hew as a churchman and indeed the grounds of Amours argument seem insufficient. The most important study in recent years has been that of George Neilson whose attempts at ascertaining the Huchowne canon have necessitated a reassessment of the importance of this early poet. Far from following the recent trend and restricting the canon by attacking the authenticity of earlier ascriptions, Neilson has actually made additions to the list of works drawn up by the least critical of the early students and has claimed for the poet a unique position in the literature of his country. Neilson approves of most of the judgments of Amours on the canon but is strongly of the opinion that the poet was Sir Hew of Eglintoun, brother-in-law of Robert II and an Auditor in Exchequer along with Barbour. He suggests that Huchowne may have been a hostage in England as a young man. During the captivity of David II the noble poet was a frequent visitor to London and took an active part in the negotiations in 1359 for the return of the king. His part in the subsequent dealings concerning the Scottish succession is far from clear but judging from the numbers and times of his visits to the English Court it appears that he probably was intimately/

intimately associated with them. Throughout this period Huchowne was the intimate friend of the Steward who as Robert II became his patron; and this fortunate relationship, which carried mutual advantages, was maintained until the poet's death in 1376 or 1377. That this Sir Hew was the veritable Huchowne of the "Awle Ryale" is the only reasonable conclusion to be drawn from the historical records, the poetical allusions, the references in Wyntoun and Dunbar and the subject matter and treatment of poems proved to be by Huchowne. These points are dealt with in convincing fashion by Dr. George Neilson in his Huchowne of the Awle Ryale (published by Maclehose 1902) in his "Sir Hew of Eglintoun" included in the Transactions of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow 1900-01 and in "The Athenaeum" 1900-01. While the position taken up by Amours in regard to Huchowne is untenable in the light of those investigations, the criticisms of Neilson relating to the canon supplement rather than contradict the findings of the earlier student. Neilson agrees with Amours that the "Great Gest of Arthure" is the "Morte Arthure" and of course that the extant "Pystyll of Susan" is the poem mentioned by Wyntoun. The "Awntyrs of Arthur" by Amours and as "Gawayne and the Grene Knight" by Sir Frederick Madden. Neilson agrees with Sir Frederick Madden that Wyntoun referred to "Gawayne and the Grene Knight"/

Knight" but he is of the opinion that the "Awntyrs of Arthure" is also to be ascribed to Huchowne. His main thesis going far beyond the mere tracking of Wyntoun's references ascribes to Sir Hew the majority of the fourteenth century poems of proved or suspected Northern origin. His list includes "The Wars of Alexander", "Destruction of Troy", "Titus and Vespasian", "Morte Arthure", "The Parlement of the Thre Ages","Gawayne and the Grene Knight", "Wynnere and Wastoure", "Erkenwald", "Awntyrs of Arthure", "The Pearl", "Cleanness", "Patience", "Golagros and Gawayne", "Pystyll of Susane". The argument is involved and as the author himself admits badly stated. It depends mainly on parallel passaged and seeks support in references to contemporary history and the poet's biography rather than in the evidence of philology. It is indeed one of the major criticisms against Neilson's work that he fails to meet the arguments based on linguistic studies presented by the various editors of the works which he ascribes to Huchowne. He sums up his attitude in one illuminating sentence, "When the philologist stands up against history he has a habit of going to the wall." When a critic submits a new view of a poet's work which traverses that taken by skilled men of judgment there is laid upon him the obligation not merely of stating his own case with the utmost clarity but of showing the error of their/

their arguments or the insignificance of their evidence. It is not sufficient for him to declare that he possesses truths unknown to them which are of a higher order and to continue his own argument with indifference to theirs or with casual references to the weakest points in the earlier criticisms. Neilson's work would have been enhanced had he allowed himself more scope and time for the treatment of a case of such importance. Some of his discoveries were made after a considerable portion of the book had been written and these are presented in ill order near the close. In spite of the unfortunate arrangement and the absence of any attempt to criticise in serious fashion the arguments of his predecessors, Neilson has produced a work which demands attention in considering Scottish literature in the time of Chaucer.

The starting point is the manuscript T.4,1 in the Hunterian Library. This manuscript* contains among other works versions of the "De Preliis Alexandri", the "Historia destructionis.Trojane Urbis" and "Maundevilles "Itinerarium". Neilson discovered that the fourteenth century "Wars of Alexander" was a fairly close translation of the Latin version in the manuscript and that it reproduced the variations from the normal Latin texts which distinguish this/

this particular version. The following facts are adduced in support of his contention. The variations from the normal found in the manuscript and in the alliterative peom were mainly names of characters, these numbering about fifty, a list of kings, and place names. The majority of the divisions of the alliterative version correspond with those of the manuscript. Two lines in the Scottish version not found in the Latin are borrowed from Maundeville's "Itinerarium" which as we have noted was included in the manuscript. Another argument upholding his position may best be stated in Neilson's own words "Comparison with the poem reveals one striking fact, viz that of the alliterative groups or pairs: (1) Flanders and France, (2) Guienne (Garnad) and Greece, (3) Norway and Noverne, (4) Bayonne and Bordeaux, (5) Turkey and Tartary, and (6) Pers and Pamphilia, all in the poem (11. 5656-77) only the first and the last have both their members in the list. The other four are in varying degree intrusions, not translations, thereby giving piquancy to the recurrence of the whole six groups in the "Morte Arthure" (11 30-46 and 572-604). Thus equally when he was truly translating and when he was amplifying his text, the alliterative poet hit on combinations also found in the "Morte Arthure". Moreover, although one line in the Alexander/

Alexander poem reads

"Ingland Itaile and Ynde and Ireland costis"

there is no mention of Scotland. The illiterative translator chose to retain England in, thrust Ireland into, and exclude Scotland from the catalogue of realms owing tribute to Alexander." Neilson's contention that the extant manuscript of the "Destruction of Troy" was the one actually used by the poet in the alliterative rendering is not so convincing as that concerning the "Wars of Alexander". The manuscript version of the Troy lacks those peculiar distinctions which marked off the Alexander from other forms. Neilson appeals to the similarity in rubrics as the main proof of relation between manuscript and alliterative poem and supports his argument by pointing out that the two agree in placing Archilocus first in the list of Hector's royal victims while most versions of the original put him fourth or fifth, but balances this by observing that the form Beelzebut which occurs in the alliterative poem is to be found in the later printed forms of the Latin version but not in the manuscript. This is slender evidence from which to conclude that the manuscript was one used by the alliterative poet but it gains some strength from its association with the Alexander. The proposition cannot

be/

be regarded as satisfactorily proved by the evidence which up to this point Neilson adduces. Further if his basic contention that an alliterative poet reveals his identity in a series of poems by the reproduction of familiar alliterative phrases we would expect that these two poems should possess many of these phrases. In actual fact only ~~dom~~ six phrases are recorded as occurring in both poems. It is worth while noting that these are the two longest poems ascribed to Huchowne by Neilson. Notice also that no way of escape is provided by dissimilarity in subject matter for the two are closely akin. Difference in date cannot be accepted as a plea for according to Neilson's own chronology the "Alexander" was written circa 1361 and the "Troy" in 1362. The critic who holds the position that these poems are by the same author and who believe so strongly in the parallel passage argument is under obligation to produce more than six evidences of similarity especially when one poem contains 5,677 lines and the other 14,044. Up to this point Neilson fails to produce sufficient evidence to show either that the manuscript was the one actually used by the maker of the alliterative "Destruction of Troy" or that one poet produced the "Wars of Alexander" and the "Destruction of Troy". The first failure/

failure is of little importance as compared with the second. In order to strengthen his ascription of the Troy to Huchowne, Neilson submits that there are relations of the greatest intricacy among the Alexander, Troy, Titus and Mort Arthure. There is ample evidence for the belief that a relation exists between the "Titus" and "Troy". Apart from the large number of single lines and phrases appearing in both poems, the occurrence of a night scene set forth in almost identical terms affords sufficient proof of some kind of association. But if the existence of a relation is to be taken for granted it is not necessary to adopt Neilson's suggestion that the poems are the work of the same creator and that the Titus was the direct successor of the Troy. Neilson is also of the opinion that "Morte Arthure" was composed after the "Titus" from which it borrowed but his evidence is insufficient. His chief reasons are as follows: (1) Arthur and his knights swear on the Vernacle. The vernacle is an integral element of the "Titus" (2) Arthur puts the Roman senators to shame by ordering them to be shaved and sent back. This occurs in the "Titus" but not in the Latin original, (3) both poems insist on the importance of the dragon banner, (4) the Titus portrait of Vespasian putting on his armour is paralleled in the Morte Arthure. No other comment on this argument is needed than that made by Henry Bradley in "The Athenaeum", June 1901.

"What/

"What Neilson has really shown unwittingly and against his will is that the author (or reviser) of the Titus plagiarized from the "Morte Arthure" as well as from the "Troy"..... Mr. Neilson has somehow persuaded himself that he proves the priority of the Titus to the Morte Arthure by simply showing that the two poems have certain features or incidents in common. Two of the four points which he adduces, however, pretty clearly prove the contrary of his proposition. The dragon banner and the description of the arming of Arthur belong to the Arthurian tradition, being found in Wace and his successors. They are therefore in their proper place in Morte Arthure, and their introduction in the Jerusalem story, with some of the phrases of the Morte Arthure, is an obvious mask of imitation on the part of the author of the Titus. According to Mr. Neilson the reason why the poet of the Morte Arthure used these incidents in the right place was that he had previously used them in a wrong place. Mr. Neilson's other two points are simply irrelevant." If proof is incomplete that the "Troy" was followed by the "Morte Arthure" in the production of the same poet it is lacking in greater degree for the proposition that the "Alexander" was the first poem of the series. The correspondence between the siege of Jerusalem in the "Titus" with the siege of Tyre in the "Alexander" is no sure proof that the former was borrowed from the latter either/

either by the same or another poet for there is always the possibility that both poets drew from the original source, the Hegesippus version of the "Bellum Judaicum". Neilson has certainly failed to show that his time sequence is correct or even that the poems are the work of a single author. The parallel passage argument especially when it is presented apart from the linguistic evidence or when it is contrary to the results of philological investigation must be exceedingly strong before it can gain acceptance. His contention for relationship between the Troy and the Titus is to be accepted but his general thesis of the succession of the Alexander, Troy, Titus and Morte Arthure has not been proved. When M. Amours in his Introduction in Scottish Alliterative Poems (Scottish Text Society) submitted his case for the acceptance of the "Awntyrs of Arthure" as the work ascribed to Huchowne by Wyntoun he made considerable use of parallel passages and although his conclusions were not solely based on this argument he presented over twenty lines and forty phrases which occurred in the Awntyrs (715 lines) under dispute and in the accepted Morte Arthure (4346 lines). If Neilson's parallelisms had existed on this scale it might have been safe for him to neglect the philologers but in the meagreness of his own form of proof he leaves his position vulnerable and by his indulgence in jibes incites his opponents to/

to the attack. While his thesis was in process of construction he fought a lone battle in "The Athenaeum" against some of the foremost students of language of the time and in many passages he took no trouble to disguise his impatience with their methods. The case of his opponents with reference to the poems discussed above was well put in June 1901 by I. Gollancz:

"I venture to think that Mr. Neilson's latest effort will not prove successful. He assumes (1) the identity of authorship of "Troy", "Titus", and "Morte Arthure"; and then (2) proceeds to arrange the poems chronologically: "Titus" follows and uses "Troy"; the "Morte Arthure" follows and uses "Titus"; the limits of dates for the three works therefore 1358 and 1376."

"It is not possible to maintain this identity of authorship. Morte Arthure on linguistic, metrical and other grounds must be differentiated from other poems. "Titus" belongs to the South West (the first 600 lines contain about a dozen instances of the prefixed y, evidently not due to the scribe but original): "Troy" is a Northern poem belonging to a period when the final e had already well nigh ceased to be pronounced: "Morte Arthure" shows the contrary characteristic. If Huchowne died in 1376 he had probably been dead for some ten years before/

before the "Troy" was written."

. . . . . .

"There is I venture to think but one satisfactory solution of the problem, if (as seems incontestable) the Morte and the Susane are both by the same author, namely this: that the Scotch poet having no native traditions of alliterative poetry of a high order, deliberately set himself the task of imitating the great school of West Midland English alliterative poetry, to the extent of even copying its grammatical practice in the matter of the final "e" (much in the same way as later on the other Scotch poets fell under the spell of the great East Midland Englishman, Chaucer.). This would explain Morte Arthure, and may also explain the puzzling rhymes of Susan. Briefly I would suggest that Huchowne was a disciple of the school of the West Midland author of "Gawain" and that the "Morte" bears the same relationship to the Susan that the great romance of Gawain does to the great lyric of the Pearl."

The next step in Neilson's argument is the attempt to prove "The Parlement of the Thre Ages" to be the work of Huchowne. Once again parallel passages furnish the main basis of his contention and the author makes much of the fact that he has been able to show that "out of 665 lines there are over 120 which contain more or less notable alliterative phrases also/

also found in the antecedent quartet." An examination of these phrases reveals the fact that a great number are the mere cliches of alliterative poetry eg."syr Gawayne the gude," "Now sall I nevyne you the names", "Hit was the moneth of May when mirthes begyn". The fact that 120 lines out of 665 are paralleled in some measure by the four poems previously ascribed by Neilson to Huchowne can be better appreciated if it is remembered that the four poems together comprise over twenty-five thousand lines, which is equivalent to 38 times the amount of the Parlement itself. It is impossible to discover the normal probability of parallelism but there is no doubt that within such scope it would account for a considerable number of the 120 instances mentioned by Neilson. In most investigations in the social sciences whenever it is practicable the student, who sets out to study a particular factor, arranges to have a control group similar to that in which he is primarily interested save in the absence of the single factor whose effect he wishes to elucidate. If such a procedure could be applied to fourteenth century alliterative verse with respect to the parallel passages it is very doubtful if this control group would be found free from lines and phrases such as those quoted by Neilson.

Neilson makes use of another manuscript from the Hunterian Library/

Library U.7, 25 for the proof of a still more inclusive canon. Arguing from rubrications to the Historia Britonum which refer to certain scenes and incidents in poems ascribed to Huchowne he concludes that this manuscript is actually the copy owned by the fourteenth century makar and that a study of these marginal notes reveals the material on which the craftsman exercised his art. Neilson frequently remarks that if his detailed arguments are to be set aside, the phenomena which he studies can only be explained by miracle: his implication that miracles do not happen in the realm of literature is confounded if his contention is correct. In this latter part of his thesis Neilson is concerned with historical rather than with literary problems and has much that is of value to say regarding allusions to contemporary events particularly in his discussion of "Wynnere and Wastoure". It is outwith our province to make a complete examination of the case presented by this ingenious critic. Suffice it to say that by appealing to historical interpretation, the known interests of Sir Hew of Eglintoun, and to philological arguments welcomed when favourable and scorned when adverse he claims to establish that inclusive canon already mentioned. Neilson attempts to arrange these poems in chronological order and to relate them to his biographical studies. Once again there is little room for certainty in view of the meagreness/

meagreness of the facts but in this instance the balance of probability seems to be against the critic. After a careful study Neilson concludes that the "Alexander" was written circa 1361, "Troy" 1362, "Titus" 1363 "Wynnere and Wastoure" 1359, "Gawayne" 1359-60, "Pearl" 1360, "Cleanness" 1360, "Patience" 1360. It does seem unlikely that Sir Hew of Eglintoun who visited the English Court in 1359 and again in 1363, who travelled to France and probably to Rome or Avignon 1369-70, and who for at least the greater part of the period under review acted as a Justiciar found time to produce over 27,000 lines of alliterative verse, some of which was worked into intricate rhyme patterns.

It is difficult to evaluate Neilson's contribution to the history of Scottish literature. While there is frequent occasion in the course of examining his work to point out that his evidence is inconclusive, it is impossible with the facts available to controvert with any degree of finality his general position that Huchowne's work is not to be confined to the three poems in the Wyntoun reference. It is undoubtedly true that he has allowed his enthusiasm to outrun his discretion in collation and that he has been too prone to cast aside as worthless the verdicts of philologers. It is likewise true that his judgments were frequently hasty in formation and obscure/

obscure in statement but in the end he has evolved an idea in the delineation of this fourteenth century makar which while it fails to convince entirely is to be regarded as at least a possibility. He has succeeded in identifying Huchowne, he has elucidated many obscure passages by relating them to contemporary events, he has read the riddle of some puzzling allegories, and he has set up a theory of a comprehensive canon which must at all events be admired as a grand perhaps. His painstaking studies revealed the fact that much research into the Northern literature of the fourteenth century requires to be done and even if he has employed the method of identification through parallel passage to the neglect of others he has shown that a considerable amount of pertinent material is made manifest by his procedure. For our present purpose it is worth while noticing that he has strengthened old claims and attempted to establish new ones for the Scottish authorship of a considerable amount of fourteenth century poetry. Before passing on to an evaluation of this work it will be well to catch a glimpse of Neilson's estimate of the poet whom he has so zealously championed. Speaking of the poet whose features he has striven with such enthusiasm to delineate he says (p.139) "It is the countenance of an immortal who ranks among the great formative forces in the literature of the English tongue who, while Chaucer was still (to public intents) silent, had ransacked/

ransacked the storehouses of Latin, French and English, in the quest of material for romantic narrative, and who no less than Chaucer set his seal forever on the literary art of his own generation and of the generations to follow. The hand which seeks to unroll a little further Wyntoun's brief scroll of Huchowne's achievement may well tremble as it deals with a task so weighty, for either these pages are a vain and credulous figment, or Huchowne's range and grasp in romance place him as a unique and lofty spirit comparable in respect of his greatness only with Walter Scott. p.141 - "Perhaps future generations will recognise him as the supreme exponent of British chivalry in its triple ideals of earnest purity, of courtesy, and of valour." Elsewhere he speaks of "a personality whose magnitude challenges the highest", "the splendour of a mighty spirit and the marvel of a unique career"; "his singly superbly appointed pen". Few who have read works ascribed to Huchowne from the point of view of literary appreciation would approve praise of this order and when it is remembered that the canon on which this estimate is based is far from being convincingly established the panegyric suffers a further loss in appropriateness. The reader who is not a blind enthusiast will discover many arid passages of dreary moralising; he will nod over long drawn encounters whose end is known from the beginning; he will observe/

observe without ecstasy the occurrence of parallel passages of the conventional romance; he will search often in vain for a pulse of life in the puppet characters; he will find many a good story marred in the making. The comparison with Scott is a mistake, the mention of Chaucer is a misfortune. Who would exchange "Morte Arthure" for "Troilus and Criseyede", or the "Awyntyrs" for "The Knight's Tale"? Further linguistic research may prove Neilson's canon to be correct but it is difficult to see how any balanced criticism will ever be found confirming his literary estimate. But if little is gained by those panegyrical utterances, still less profit is to be found in such a statement as T.F.Henderson's in his "Scottish Vernacular Literature", p.33. "All these works - whether Huchowne's or not - appear to us more or less bizarre. Though linguistically of great interest and though metrically they left traces of their influence on later poetry, they are devoid of any such qualities as could attract the modern reader; but the "Awntyrs" of Arthure especially has a good deal of graphic face". There can be no doubt that if the modern reader approaches the poems ill-equipped with knowledge of Middle English vocabulary and constructions his interest will not be attracted - and the fault will lie with the modern reader. Patience is required before literary appreciation of fourteenth century verse can be achieved and even then the reader is to some extent at the mercy/

mercy of the idiosyncrasies of the scribe or the linguistic vagaries of the poet. Taking even the restricted canon of T.F.Henderson the description of these works as "bizarre" is more damaging to the critic than the poet. The way of truth seems to lie somewhere between the eulogy of Neilson and the faint praise of Henderson. It is true as already noted that there are many passages possessed of scant literary value, but it is no less true that especially within the wider canon there is a considerable volume of poetry. It is not necessary for our present purpose to evaluate from a literary point of view all this work that has been ascribed to Huchowne . It has already been pointed out that this great volume of verse attributed to the Northern makar contains much that is of value only from historical considerations. It is important to realise however the nature of these productions and to find what part they play in the development of Scottish literature. Let us consider first of all the one poem "The Pystyll of Swete Susane" which can be claimed with certainty to be the work of Huchowne. Like most fourteenth century Scottish verse "The Pystyll" is a translation or at best a paraphrase, the original being the Vulgate story of Susanna and the Elders. We can obtain some measure of the author's skill in comparing his treatment of the story with the original/

original setting and noting especially the omissions and additions. The two principal parts found in the poem but not in the Vulgate version are the list of trees in Joachim's garden and the moving scene after the trial when Joachim and Susanna take leave of each other. The list of trees marks the poet as belonging to that great brotherhood of mediaeval versifiers who proved their skill in stringing together lists of birds, flowers, animals, or trees. The excuse for such digressions was usually flimsy and in this respect the present instance forms no exception. Huchowne's list is as ingenious as the others but he shows no evidence of departing from the type. His domination by the convention and at the same time the possibility of valued variation can best be made manifest by recalling

"The builder oak and eke the hardy ash"

of the English master. It is worth while noting that the stanzas wherein the account of Joachim's garden is given correspond in place to an incident in the Vulgate story omitted in "The Pystyll". The part omitted tells of the growing lust of the Elders and of their conspiracy, thus giving a semblance of probability to the story which the poetic version lacks. The absence of any reference to a prearranged plan in Huchowne's account renders their conduct preposterous to the point of incredibility and at the same time robs the

poem/

poem of an incident which might have been handled with dramatic effects. A Chaucer might well have introduced the conventional catalogue of trees but he would most certainly not have failed to grasp an incident which possessed intrinsic dramatic worth and which was necessary for the credibility of the tale. The second of the two additions previously noted that of the parting scene, is contained in the most frequently quoted stanza of the fourteenth century poet.

The Vernon manuscript version after alterations in conformity with the modern alphabet reads as follows:

> Heo fel doun flat in the flore, hir feere whon heo fond
> Caſped to him kyndeli, as heo ful wel couthe:
> "I wis I wratthed the neuere, at my ȝitand,
> Neither in word ne in werk, in elde ne in youthe."
> Heo ȝeuered up on hir kneos, and cussed his hand:
> "For I am dampned, I ne dar disparage thi mouth."
> Was neuer more serȝeful segge bi se nor bi sande,
> Ne neuer a soriore siht bi north ne bi south;
> Tho thare,
> Thei toke the Feteres of hire feete
> And euere he cussed that swete;
> "In other world schul we mete."
> Seid he no mare."

Here is no failure to grasp a situation capable of dramatic treatment. The Vulgate version contains no reference to a meeting with Joachim at the time of the pronouncement of the doom and the story hastens on to the point where the anxiety over the fate of Susanna is suddenly dispelled and justice is done. In the poem, this added stanza sustains the suspense for a moment longer and leads us nearer to tragedy. Moreover the/

the scene introduces something of human interest and reveals the truth that the present world contains riches whose renunciation even for the rewards of the future is a sacrifice indeed. The moralist would present this scene as one of heavenly aspiration where the soul struggles to escape from a world impure in calummy as in lust; it is the artist who sees that the earthly bonds of a purified affection can be sundered not without suffering and pain even in the moment when the rewards of righteousness and holiness are revealed to the enraptured vision. The stanza is distinguished by a fine restraint. The language possesses the simplicity of heart-felt words. The poem has some other additions and omissions which appear on comparison with the Vulgate version but these are of no great significance although mention might be made of the fact that the poet is at fault in assuring the reader near the beginning that finally his villains receive their deserts. The translation is fairly close throughout and renders the spirit as well as the letter of the original. The poet makes no attempt to pass beyond the conventional in description and is content to apply the most obvious epithet in keeping with his alliterative scheme. In treatment as in subject matter he is no creator but is little more than the diligent craftsman who is prepared to follow the best available models. The poem is the/

the work of one who is skilled in versifying and who is capable of producing a flash of genius rather than a sustained effort of high quality. In spite however of his lack of the highest technical skill, and dramatic insight, Huchowne reveals himself to possess a warm sympathy for his subject. The theme especially at the beginning required careful handling and is indeed of such a type that successful treatment can be expected only from one whose thought is prompted by a sincere piety. It was because of this devotional feeling that M.Armour's was confirmed in his theory.that Sir Hew was a monk. Although it is not safe to argue from statements of general opinion to particulars it is difficult to avoid the feeling that the story presents opportunities for the weary didacticism popular in the Middle Ages which the professional exponent of morality would seldom miss. Again sincere piety was not the peculiar possession of the clergy in the fourteenth century; else, it were a rare virtue. These considerations remove any difficulties in the way of concluding that the poem was the work of a nobleman whose devout life won for him the title of "the gude Sir Hew". In spite of the technical defects, and in spite of the acceptance of the conventions of fourteenth century alliterative verse, the poem remains one of the finest religious pieces/

pieces of mediaeval times and is surpassed only by "The Pearl". It is not our intention to produce a lengthy criticism of this latter poem which has received such careful treatment from Gollancz. It possesses a still more tender sympathy than "The Pystyll" and its scenes are depicted with a more conscious art. The allegory is obviously more important than the narrative; indeed there is some difficulty in discovering the exact nature of the events on which the allegory is based. The author has attained a felicity of expression for the description of objects and natural scenery not to be found in "The Pystyll". The poems are alike in finding their inspiration in the spirit of devout purity. If the "Pearl" is rightly ascribed to Huchowne, the reputation of the Northern makar is thereby enhanced, but no new field of accomplishment is claimed for him nor do we require to alter our account of the moods in which his genius found expression. The "Pearl" with all its wistful beauty and sincerity of feeling may or may not be the work of the author of "The Pystyll"; the former is undoubtedly superior to the latter but the two most certainly belong to the same poetic genre. For our present purpose it is important to note that this treatment of religious and moral themes was one of the characteristics of fourteenth century/

century poetry and that the degree of Scottish success therein is to be measured by "The Pystyll of Swete Susane" if not by the "Pearl".

The "Awyntyrs of Arthure" (Scottish Alliterative Poems, Edited by Amours for the Scottish Text Society) was first claimed by Amours to be the "Awntyre of Gawane" mentioned by Wyntoun and the claim has been upheld. Quite apart from the contention that this poem is the actual one referred to by the chronicler, evidence exists of a conclusive character showing that "The Awntyrs" was the work of the author of "The Pystyll" and of "Morte Arthure". This poem is different in type from the one previously discussed. It belongs to the great Arthurian cycle of Romance produced so voluminously in this period. The manner and matter of the Romance influenced the literature of every country in Western Europe not only in the time when the cycles were the main stock of secular poetry but in subsequent ages when the social order in which it was engendered had ceased to be. In a moment's thought we see that every great poetic period has found inspiration in it. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Keats, Tennyson, may all be called as witnesses of the potency of these tales of chivalry and even a poet remote in so many ways as Thomas Hardy shows that English poetry has not escaped from/

from its power even today. The early literature is rich in Romance, particularly of the Arthurian Cycle, while later the great period of poetic activity which developed after the decay of the romance owed a considerable debt to the early translators. While these stories were not the peculiar possession of the Scottish people, and were not identified in origin with any nationalistic movement, the traditional association of Gawane with Southern Scotland gave a prominence to the doings of that knight in particular and an interest in the cycle in general which otherwise might not have existed in the North. It would be a mistake however to attribute the interest in the Arthurian romance entirely to the association of Gawane with Scotland, for it cannot be repeated too often that in the catholicity of the Middle Ages, the appreciation of these poems was not confined within the narrow limits of national boundaries. The title of the poem, "The Awntyrs of Arthur", is indeed a misnomer for the events recorded deal mainly with Gawane and only incidentally with Arthur. This consideration has strengthened Amour's belief in the identity of our poem with the reference in Wyntoun. The most obvious point in criticism is that the poem consists of two incidents loosely bound together, for the story of the ghost whose appearance/

appearance during the hunt occupies the earlier part is joined to that of the combat between Gawane and Galeroun told in the later only through the appearance of the new champion at the conclusion of the hunting. The poet himself seems to have been aware of the weakness and makes a belated attempt at the end of the poem to knit the two parts together by a description of Gaynour's efforts to achieve the desired release for the tormented spirit of her mother.

> "Waynour gared wisely write in the west,
> To al the religious to rede and to sing;
> Preestes with processione to pray were prest,
> With a mylioune of masses to make the mynnynge.
> Boke lerned mene, bishops the best,
> Thorghe al Bretayne besely the burde gared rynge."

Amours was of the opinion that in the earlier part of the story, the poet was guided by his own inventive genius, but the research of Neilson has revealed a source the evidence for which is satisfactory in "Trentalle Sancti Gregorii" (See "Huchown of the Awle Ryale" p.III). But even although the material is not original, there is much more room for invention in the variously told tales of the cycles and in the "Trentalle" which required considerable adaptation than was possible in "The Pystyll of Susane". It has already been noted that the poet failed to create an artistic unity but it should be pointed out that in introducing the "Trentalle" he made a praiseworthy/

praiseworthy attempt at originality in the arrangement if not in the making of material. We may regard "The Awntyrs of Arthur" as an early attempt to break away from the Arthurian tradition, and give to the poet his meed of praise. He would have attained greater success by treating his adaptation as an incident by itself instead of tacking it on to a story paralleled many times in Romance. The first part of "The Awntyrs" contains several passages of description approaching the style of Sackville. In describing the loathsome ghost and again in conveying the feeling of terror at the darkening of the sun, Huchowne justified the praise which Wyntoun accorded him as one

"That cunnand was in literature".

The finest stanza, and what is usually the same thing, the one most frequently quoted is the following:-

"Bare was hir body, and blake to the bone,
Alle by-claggede in clay, uncomlyly clede;
It weryit, it wayemettede like a womane,
That nowther one hede, ne one hare, hillynge it hade.
It Stottyde, it stounnede, it stode als a stane,
It marrede, it mournede, it moyssede for made,
Unto that grysely gaste, Sir Gaweayne es gane;
He raykede to it one a rase, for he was neuer rade;
For rade was he neuer, nowe who that ryghte redis.
One the chefe of the cholle,
A tade pykit one hir polle,
Hir eghne ware holkede fulle holle,
Glowand als gledis."

Of course it is true that even in this stanza there is much

that/

that belongs to the conventional manner of the poet of romance. At least two examples of the familiar tags can be found ("who that ryghte redis" and "Glowand als gledis"), but taking the stanza as a whole, the poet is the master of the alliterative technique and every student of poetry of this type knows now frequently the situation is reversed. Choice of words here is not dictated mainly by exigencies arising from the pursuit of the letter. The middle verses of the stanza possess a certain gruffness appropriate to the theme and it is not the product of mere crudity nor is it required always by the alliterative pattern. It depends on the use of the r sound which, while it is the staple of a few verses, is found close at hand in others where this sound does not introduce the alliterating syllables. The choice of the last four lines for the revelation of the supreme horror reveals that respect for artistic effect and consciousness of purpose which are so frequently lacking in the cycles.

The religious mood is again apparent in the first part of the poem, the main theme being one that is frequently handled in mediaeval poetry. The counsel given to Gaynour by her ghostly mother has been set forth in more awesome tones in the "Lyke-Wake Dirge" of a later day.* The poet does/

* see foot of next page.

does not allow himself to be carried away with his zeal for moralising, for while the ghost does give advice it is always set out in person. The character never appears to be the mouthpiece of the author's didacticism, for even when the sentiments are such as might be dear to one who earned the title of the "gude Sir Hew", they are given in the sorrowful tones of the lugubrious spirit and with the directness of one whose time for communing ended with the "witching hour". Huchowne either did not possess or zealously curbed that fatal facility in admonition cherished by the cloistered verse-maker and whether the lack of this wearisome vice is due to a providential omission in his poetic constitution or to virtuous abnegation, posterity should/

*The following stanzas are among the best in the poem:-

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Every night and alle;
Sit thee down and put them on
And Christ receive thye saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gavest nane,
Every night and alle;
The whinnes shall pricke thee to the bare bane;
And Christ receive thye saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
Every hight and alle;
The fire shall never make thee shrink;
And Christ receive thye saule.

If meat or drink thou never gavest nane,
Every hight and alle;
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane; And Christe receive thye saule.

should be duly thankful. The hunt which forms the setting for the first part of the poem is described in terms which show familiarity with the fairly elaborate technique of the chase in mediaeval times. The recurrence of such scenes in "Gawayne and the Grene Knight" in "The Parlement of the Thre Ages", in the "Troy", in "Wynnere and Wastoure", has been quoted as confirmatory of the suggested single authorship of these and other poems in the Neilson canon. Considering the frequency of reference to the chase in mediaeval literature, this circumstance is of no great importance, but it is worth while noticing that Huchowne in the poems known to be of his creation shows an interest in hunting, and a considerable ability in dealing with its technique and in recording its bustle and excitement. The second part of the poem that dealing with the combat between Gawane and Galleroun belongs to a type common in Romance cycles. The poet recounts in detail the circumstances leading up to the duel, describes the lists prepared for the jousting and the armour of the combatants, then proceeds to record the encounter stroke by stroke. The hero soon realises that his enemy is a man worthy of his mettle and before the first passages are well completed finds his life in jeopardy To the accompaniment of the exultation of the opponent's fair/

fair lady and the lamenting of his own courtly sympathisers, the knight struggles valiantly until he becomes the aggressor. The mood of the spectators alters; gradually the hero attains the ascendant. At length the long foreseen victory is won. With some gain rather than loss of honour, the challenger surrenders and the merciful justice of chivalry accords him broad lands and a place at the Round Table. On this occasion the poet reveals a close acquaintance with the usages of knightly combat and a familiarity with courtly etiquette which give the impression that the author had a more direct knowledge of these matters than can be acquired through reading. While it would be unsafe to make a statement approaching certainty concerning the poet himself from the evidence, the balance of probability lies with courtly rather than with clerical authorship. Taking the two parts of the poem together, the contention that the "gude Sir Hew" was a noble rather than a monk appears highly reasonable. It should be noticed that precept gives place to example in whatsoever moral teaching is attempted in the poem. It is impossible to discover now to what degree Huchowne intended the latter part to point a moral, for the poem can be read as a simple tale of chivalry. The events are related with an apparent interest in the story for its own/

own sake and without any obvious concern for the reader's moral and spiritual uplift.

"Morte Arthure", which has been identified as the "Gret Gest" mentioned by Wyntoun, belongs to the same type as the "Awntyrs". The poem is however on a much larger scale and for a variety of reasons affords better opportunity for evaluating Huchowne's prowess as romancer. Neilson has made a valuable contribution to the study of this work in revealing the sources from which the poet obtained his material. The poet drew mainly from the Vulgate version of "The Brut" but he had recourse also to Maundeville's "Itinerary", certain treatises on law, the Voeux de Paon and perhaps to various works in the Neilsonian canon. Huchowne's treatment of this material is a matter of greater importance than its place of origin. In criticising "Morte Arthure" the first point to be made as in the criticism of the "Awntyrs" is concerned with construction. In this case a series of instances is recorded within a general scheme which is concerned with Arthur's expedition and the treachery of Mordred. The events, especially those in the earlier part of the poem lack anything approaching inevitability in sequence but occur without much reference to a general plan. The impression of looseness of construction/

construction conveyed by such treatment is not to be blamed entirely on the Scottish makar for he follows the order of happenings found in the Vulgate version. A more important criticism of the poem and one which takes us nearer to the genius of the poet himself concerns the variations from the authorities employed. On a number of occasions he inserts passages some of which possess considerable literary value. One of the finest of these examples is Arthur's Lament over Gawane slain in battle. (Thornton MS. ll 3957-3965).

> Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede!
> For nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide!
> Here es the hope of my hele, my happynge of armes!
> My concelle, my comforthe, that kepide myne herte,
> Of alle knyghtes the kynge, that under Criste lifede.
> My wele and my wirchepe of all this werlde riche
> Was wonnene thourghe Sir Gawaine and thourgh his witte one."

It is noteworthy that as in the passage inserted in "The Pystyll of Swete Susane" there is here the appreciation of a situation capable of dramatic treatment and a fine restraint in depicting a scene of emotional intensity. The whole poem confirms the impression noted in criticising the Pystyll" and the "Awntyrs" that the author is the master of his technique and that although he is content usually to confine himself within the limits of translation or para-

phrase/

paraphrase he reveals on occasion a poetic ability of no mean order. Neilson elaborates a similar idea in showing that Huchowne shaped his material to the form of allegory. With considerable skill he pointed out that the disposition of Arthur's troops differs from that outlined in "The Brut" but is identical with the order of battle adopted by the English at Crecy, while he also made it clear that a parallelism exists between the sea-fight off Winchelsea in 1350 in which the English encountered a Spanish force and that recorded in the poem where Arthur overcame Mordred. Neilson concludes that Arthur represents Edward III and that the poem together with "The Awntyrs of Arthure" was a tribute to "the king of chivalry" at whose table Huchowne had been welcomed.

The main work attributed to Huchowne belongs to the two types of which "The Pystyll" and "Morte Arthure" may be taken as examples. Other work has been done in two categories mentioned by J.H.Millar, history and allegory. It is not necessary to give examples of those types because his historical poems such as the "Alexander" and the "Troy" are intimately associated with the romance while such poems as "Erkenwald" and even "The Parlement of Thre Ages" whose authorship is uncertain belong really to the religious type.

Huchowne/

Huchowne wrote at a time when the fortunes of Scotland had fallen low. The king was a prisoner in England, the conduct of home affairs was done badly or left undone while baronial faction flourished. Parliament was in the hands of the Second Estate and lacked the qualities of a national institution, while the descendant of Bruce was prepared to barter away the Scottish succession to a descendant of Edward I. It would be a vain task to search for evidences of nationalism in the literature of the period; it is indeed difficult to find traces in these poems of the nationality of their author. The themes belong to Christendom, while in the manner of treatment and even in the dialect the work is indistinguishable from that done across the Border. The critic who would establish the Scottish authorship of these poems must be content with such doubtful evidences as an apparent familiarity with place-names North of the Border and an occasional alteration in the size of an army giving Scotland a more favourable position in comparison with her neighbours. He cannot appeal to any qualities which are characteristically Scottish nor can he point to any description of landscape which would betray the origin of the poet. But Huchowne is not to blame; National allegiance had not developed nor did any institution exist in which could/

could be centred the aspirations of the people. Scottish poetry at this time consisted of the romances which were the stock-in-trade of versifiers throughout Europe, religious poems inspired by a Catholic Church, and a few crude patriotic songs and cries. The actual literary achievement in Scotland up to this time was small enough but it represented a definite beginning in that continuous imaginative reconstruction of life which is the literature of a nation. The work that has been reviewed up to this point may not rank high when judged by comparative estimate, but it is historically of the greatest importance in that it influenced considerably the direction of subsequent development. In the later years of the fourteenth century, some important factors making for the development of national consciousness were beginning to operate. Chief of these was the memory of national achievement under Bruce. Men living at that time might well be pardoned for looking back with admiration to the victories of the earlier years. Within five decades after his death, many adventures real and imaginary were attributed to Bruce. Here was material for romance and a hero to compare with Gawane or Arthur himself. The process which had made the cycles of romance possible was taking place in Scotland itself. Men were refashioning the life

of/

of a popular hero; in earlier years their remembrances infused with imagination would have furnished the raw material for epic if not for mythology. In the fourteenth century the epic manner was wanting but another art form existed, a familiar mould worn by frequent use and soon to be discarded. A growing national consciousness, a group of adventure stories clustered around a hero king, an art technique, these provided the motive, the matter, and the manner for a romance whose hero would be the Bruce. All that was needed was a poet in sympathy with the development of the nation, in touch with the popular tales, and acquainted with the methods of the romancers.

The poet was found in John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen. As Auditor in Exchequer he was closely associated with State affairs and probably took a lively interest in the growing nationalism of his own day. The "Brus" in itself affords sufficient evidence of his knowledge of the folk tales concerning the hero king. Frequent quotations from early romance literature show that he was intimately acquainted with that art form while still more cogent proof may be found in the ascription to him of a translation of the "Alexander". In discussing the "Bruce" and the "Alexander" in his "John Barbour; Poet and Translator" Neilson says, "whether the poet made the translation first and/

and then wrote the "Bruce" with direct reminiscences dogging him at every turn, or whether he used the technique of the "Bruce" for the subsequent translation of a romance with which he was already intimately familiar, is after all only secondary. The broad certainty is that both are very direct expressions of the French romance, applied in the one case to genuine translation and in the other to the poetic shaping of a noble chapter of Scottish annals, a new, admirable, and in the deepest sense historical chanson de geste, and that both works are of approximately the same date". It would be difficult to find throughout the history of Scottish literature a work whose raison d'etre can be as certainly outlined as the "Brus". It stands in the closest relation to the preceding history and literature and it is one of the chief glories of its maker that by virtue of his sympathy with national and literary trends he brought to his work the power of the moment. It is strange indeed then that so many Scottish histories of literature, take the "Brus" as the first literary product worthy of consideration. It is not surprising that critics and historians following such a practice, when they come to the greatest period in the nation's literature, find it necessary to seek its source in English poetry, nor is it altogether a matter of amazement/

amazement in the light of this fact that they should be content to describe the finest group of poets their country has known as "Scottish Chaucerians". Barbour played an important part in fashioning the literature of Scotland but he is not to be regarded as the father of Scottish poetry. The analogy with Chaucer is erroneous save on linguistic and metrical grounds and even within these limits it cannot be made without strain.

It is not necessary to restate here the facts of the poet's life as recorded in "The Accounts of the Great Chamberlains of Scotland", "The Exchequer Rolls", "Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis", "Rotuli Scotiae", "Rymer's Foedera". Professor Skeat in his edition of the "Brus" has collected and arranged the pertinent abstracts in his usual methodical fashion, and many others have interpreted the facts and coloured them with imagination. The present purpose will be served by recalling that Barbour is revealed by authentic records as the scholarly clerk, who was also the man of affairs, the student who sojourned in Oxford and Paris for some time, the recipient of royal favour, the chivalrous patriot who was not blind to the virtues of the enemy. The date and place of his birth are alike unknown although conjecture has agreed recently to the year/

year 1320 while the acceptance of Aberdeen as his native town has become traditional. He died in 1395.

The Barbour canon is not without its problems, but happily these are not so complicated and perplexing as those associated with his fellow Auditor in Exchequer. Fortunately there is no dispute over the authorship of the "Brus" which is by far the most important work ascribed to him, but there is difference of opinion concerning the degree in which even that poem has remained true to its original form. Apart from the "Brus", which will be discussed later, critics and historians have at various times attributed to him (1) a version of the "Brut", (2) "The Stewartis Orygynalle", (3) a translation in part at least of Guido delle Colonne's "Historia Destructionis Troie", (4) "Legends of the Saints" in part or in whole, while Neilson completes the list by adding (5) "The Buik of Alexander" translated from the "Fuerre de Gadres" and the "Voeux du Paon".

The principal reference to which appeal is made in ascribing a version of the "Brut" to Barbour consists of the last lines of Chapter VIII and the first lines of Chapter IX in Wyntoun's Chronicle, Bk.2 (Laing's edition) where the question of the early settlement of Ireland by a group of Spaniards/

Spaniards is under discussion.

"Off Hiber thai come Halyly
That we oys to call Yrschery;
And this lady callyd Scota
All thir Scottis ar cummyn fra,
As yhe may in this proces here
Quhen we are cummyn to that matere.

Chap.IX.

(On othir wiis this chapitere
Sayis the Yrsche cummyn were.)
Bot be the Brwte yhit Barbare sayis
Off Gurgwunt Badruk quhile wes kyng
And Bretayne has in governyng;
Worthy wycht and wyse wes he."

Skeat concludes that Barbour was the translator of the "Brut" and cites other references to that poem in Wyntoun's Chronicle none of which makes mention of Barbour. One of these passages has been used as evidence. It is that in which Wyntoun points out that the "Brut" calls Lucius Iberius Procurator and not Emperor.

"But off the Brwte the story sayis
That Lucius Hiberius in hys dayis,
Wes off the hey state Procurature,
Nowther cald kyng na Empryowre."

(Bk.5, Ll 4315-4318).

In "The Brus" Bk.I, l.544 Barbour calls Lucius Iberius Emperor. Skeat concludes that the "Brus" was written before the translation of "Brut" and that Barbour deliberately corrected the title to Procurator on discovering that this was the rank ascribed by Geoffrey of Monmouth. J.T.T. Brown/

Brown discusses this matter fully in "The Wallace and the Bruce Restudied" and disposes of the foregoing arguments. "The phrase 'be the Brute' means simply 'by' = 'following the Brute' or 'according to the Brute'; and knowing as we do that Barbour derived the Stuart pedigree from a Southern stock, that is to say from the eponymous Brutus through Banquo, whose son Fleance was the father of Walter, Steward of Scotland, one is not surprised that he followed the English chronicle concerning the settlement of the Irish rather than any of the conflicting Scottish authorities." Brown points out that Wyntoun refers on several occasions to the "Brut" and that on one he gives a clue to the identity of the actual version he employed. The passage which is the second one quoted by Skeat in defence of his thesis shows Wyntoun to be of the opinion that the "Brut" speaks of Lucius Iberius as Procurator. Wace and Layamon make the correction and consequently Brown concludes that Wyntoun was using Geoffrey of Monmouth's Latin original in which the reference is "Lucius Reipublicae Procurator Arturo regi Britanniae quod meruit". In the light of the evidence it does not seem necessary to attribute a vernacular version available to Wyntoun nor does the suggestion that such a rendering was made by Barbour appear well-founded/

well-founded. Brown upholds Skeat in accepting Wyntoun's attribution of "The Stewartis Orygynalle" to Barbour as authentic .

Amours in his more recent edition of Wyntoun has produced evidence of great importance in favour of the belief that "The Stewartis Orygynalle" is identical with "The Brut". Wyntoun again is the source to which appeal is made.

> "Off Brutus lynnage quha will heire
> Ye luke the tretiss of Barbere
> Made in till a genology." (Wyntoun III 621)

In Bk.II l.131 another reference is made.

> This Ninus had a sone alsua,
> Schire Dardane, lord of Frigia,
> Fra quham maister Johne Barbour,
> That mekle couth of this labour,
> Translatit weill and propirly
> Fra this Dardane a genology
> Till Robert Stewart oure secund king."

The Wyntoun passages referring to "The Stewartis Orygynalle" certainly bear the construction put on them by Amours whose opinion has been upheld by the scholar most competent to judge on the matter, Professor Graeme Ritchie in his Introduction (p.216) to the "Buik of Alexander".

The evidence for a Barbour Troy Book is even less conclusive than that for the "Brut". The critics who attach weight to internal evidence particularly of a philological/

philological character are strongly opposed to the Barbour ascription while those who disparage philology and all its works and trust to external evidence and higher criticism are equally insistent on claiming the Scottish poet as translator. A reference in the "Brus" (Bk.I lines 521-526) makes it certain that Barbour was acquainted with the work of Guido Delle Colonne. The principal locus for the controversy is the manuscript (Cambridge University Press Library Bk.V,30) which contains Guido's version. On the ninth leaf of the manuscript as it presently exists occur the words, "Here endis Barbour and begynnis the monk". Thereafter, follows the "Siege of Troy" and on leaf 304 is written, "Here endis the monk and begynnis Barbour." Neilson's remarks from "John Barbour; Poet and Translator" are of interest as showing the attitude of the critic who emphasises external evidence. "With an inscription so plain, so near the period with which it deals, so nicely discriminative between the two component parts of the compilation, so absolutely true as regards "the monk", scepticism might have learned to suspect itself before daring to reject the other half, Barbour's half, of the imitation. Instead, the grammar and the rime-lore of the critics have blinded them to the presence of the poet's idiosyncrasies/

idiosyncrasies in the translator's work; they have devised laws for rime all too rigorous for Barbour, who was no purist; they have not sufficiently remembered that different themes involve great changes in vocabulary and treatment; while significant of philological rather than historical preferences, it escapes notice that in the old inventory of the library of the Cathedral where Barbour served, there was a "Hystoria Trojana" as well as another volume "De Bellis Trojanorum". This indictment is pronounced with so much emphasis that one would expect to find it justified by the inadequacy and incorrectness of Neilson's opponents. While Neilson has shown that some of the evidence is of doubtful worth, yet a re-examination of Skeat's case, quoted as it is mainly from Dr. Koppel and P.Buss shows that the argument against Barbour's authorship is supported by a certain amount of fact not satisfactorily dealt with by Neilson's denunciation. The evidence presented by Skeat deals mainly with the absence of alliteration at the end of lines, the omission of phrases frequently used in the "Brus" and the introduction of new ones, the use of words not in his authentic work and certain variations in rhyme.

On the whole the verdict seems to lie with Neilson. Skeat weakens his own case considerably when he declares that/

that "a man named Barbour" was perhaps the author of the Troy Book". The matter is beyond certainty, in the present state of the evidence and the balanced judgment of Graeme Ritchie is the most satisfactory interpretation of the facts. " The statement of an early fifteenth century scribe and the very marked similarity of treatment suggest that the extant "Troy Book" is his, and we do not find any conclusive proof that it is not, either in the data collected by the German scholars (Buss and Koeppel) or in the very confident deductions made therefrom. We know that Barbour was familiar with Guido's work either in the original Latin or in a French version, and it seems extremely probable that he translated it into Scots" ("Buik of Alexander" Introduction p.191)

The critic, Henry E.Bradley, who brought to light the reference to Barbour in Lydgate's "Siege of Troy" was also responsible for claiming for the Scottish poet a collection of "Legends of the Saints (see Volume in Scottish Text Society edited by Dr. W.M.Metcalfe). These rather dreary tales ~~here~~ have received various kinds of treatment from critics in search of an author. Skeat supported by Buss and Metcalfe is of the opinion that none of them were produced by Barbour. Brown says "While wishful to hold St. Machar and/

and perhaps two others to be by John Barbour, the bulk of the Legends in my opinion comes from another and later hand, more probably from several hands." Neilson in his whole-hearted manner falls upon the sceptics and claims the complete collection for Barbour. He is jealous for the authorship of the St.Machar above the rest of the Legends. The probability, based as it is on the thorough research of Dr. Metcalfe, is against our poet but the loss is not great. The acceptance of the Legends as Barbour's work would not add to his poetical reputation, nor would it require any new assessment of the qualities of his mind and character. The chief consequence would be the conclusion that Barbour like other artists produced work of different grades of achievement.

Controversy over the "Buik of Alexander" is of more recent date. Neilson rendered a valuable service to Scottish literature when following Herrmann, he examined with painstaking thoroughness the "Buik of Alexander" a Scottish version in octosyllabic couplets of the "Roman d'Alexandre" and revealed considerable parallelisms with the "Brus". In number and kind these parallel passages are of such a nature as to prove to the most sceptical of critics that an intimate association exists between the two/

two poems. The "Buik" which possesses considerable literary merit, consists of renderings of the "Fuerre de Gadres" from the "Roman d'Alexandre" and the Longuyon "Voeux du Paon" together with an alliterative description of May paralleled in the "Brus" and a colophon at the end giving the date as 1438. Neilson in his examination paid more attention than usual to philological principles and produced many important facts in support of his thesis which may be stated in his own vigorous terms. ("John Barbour; Poet and Translator" p.42). "When regard is had to the accumulation of evidence now adduced, it is no longer possible to doubt that Barbour's Bruce and the Alexander are from one pen. No imaginable theory of copying, no conceivable saturation of one poet's mind with the conceptions, the technique, the style, the vocabulary and the mannerisms of another would offer reasonable explanation of resemblances so intimate and so perfectly sustained." In order to uphold this claim, Neilson has to explain away the date 1438 in the colophon. He instances a considerable number of errors in dates in the fifteenth century and shows that a slip made by the printer could change an original 1378 into an erroneous 1438. If that argument should not be accepted, he is ready to explain the/

the date by regarding it as that of the time of copying rather than that of composing. This is not convincing although the fact is that there are innumerable ways of explaining away such a date. Brown accepted the validity of Neilson's parallelisms but he did not arrive at the same conclusion from them. He opposed the ascription to Barbour and proposed as explanation of the parallelisms "redaction of the 'Brus' after 1438 by someone who embodied in the course of his editing many lines from the 'Alexander'". (Wallace and Bruce Restudied"). Occasion will arise later to consider Brown's general position which is that Sir John Ramsay was the composer of the "Wallace", a poem suggested by Blind Harry or in some other slight fashion connected with his name, and that he also was the embellisher of the "Brus". As far as Barbour's work is concerned, Brown had the following opinion. "A Scottish poet in 1437, I believe David Rate, translated certain episodes of the "Alexander" romance from the French, sometimes abridging sometimes expanding his original. He was well acquainted with and slightly used as a source the "Gest Historiale" for embellishing his translation. Some thirty-five years later another Scottish poet John Ramsay, Sir John the Ross, wishful to improve the plain song of John Barbour, used the translation of the "Alexander" extensively, taking freely whatever he required."

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The rival theories were discussed in the most lively fashion by the protagonists in the public press with the result that the more extravagant claims, not dealt with here, had to be relinquished. Within the last thirty years the controversy has engaged the attention of many scholars including Professor Graigie, T.F.Henderson, J.H. Miller, J.Maitland Thomson and Professor Gregory Smith most of whom either rejected Neilson's theory or admitted it as a possibility requiring further proof. The whole position has been altered within the last few years by the appearance of Professor Graeme Ritchie's masterly edition of the "Buik of Alexander" (S.T.S) the last volume of which appeared at the beginning of the present year (1930). Graeme Ritchie is fully alive to the weakness of the parallel passage argument. He makes some use of the technique of the control group referred to in our discussion earlier and actually shows that several parallel passages mentioned by Neilson as proof of the common authorship of the "Brus" and the "Alexander" are again paralleled in parts of the Chronicle proved to be Wyntoun's. He is strongly opposed to Brown's redaction theory and shows by careful examination of the "Brus" the "Alexander" and the "Pallet of Nine Worthies" that the interconnections are of such/

such a nature as to be inexplicable save by appeal to common authorship. He shows that the supposed interpolations include some of the finest passages of the "Brus" and that although they are lengthy they contain no deviations in tone, construction or vocabulary from the rest of the poem. His mildly bantering satire is excusable in the light of the evidence:- "To think that this was done after A.D.1438, anonymously, without hope of credit or reward, that Scotland might never have to blush for her first epic, or all for the love of Archdeacon Barbour, who had then been in his grave for forty years and more! Most noble Interpolator! Would that all writers were as well served as was John Barbour after death." His theory of the "Ballet of the Nine Nobles" is that Barbour after translating the "Voeux du Paon" reduced certain selected passaged to ballad form making reference to the nine worthies and then added a stanza in praise of Bruce. Thus he establishes connections between the "Buik" and the "Ballet" and between the "Ballet" and the "Brus". His general theory which is based on more than sufficient evidence is contained in the following summary. (Introduction p.158). "This continual utilisation of the same subject matter, these constant reminiscences, repeated allusions and/

and pet phrases, these cross references from each of the three works, are incredible on the part of a redactor, but they are possible enough on the part of an author. They are his cherished themes and formulas. Barbour not only knew the two romances in their original French, as several allusions to their subject matter prove; he translated them, and he translated them, as close verbal agreements show, in his own peculiar style. He also composed the "Ballet" and the "Brus" - in his own style; and when in the composition of the "Brus" matter ran short or inspiration failed, his memory supplied him with illustrations from the "Buik".

The importance of this newly ascertained fact in Scottish literature is considerable. It destroys the accepted idea of Barbour as a somewhat bungling chronicler who happened to write down the stories told to him by Scottish peasants and shows that the poet's success was due not to fortuitous circumstances but to an honestly served apprenticeship. Trained through his translations in the technique of the French Romance he practised as a journeyman on the material of his native land. The "Stewartis Orygynalle", "The Ballet", "The Buik" and the "Brus" are the work of a man interested in chivalry and noble/

noble kinship. Barbour is revealed as the hero-worshipper who was not content to stand idly by while noble names were forgotten. We see him also as the patriotic poet who saw in the great king a hero who could be compared with the noblest of antiquity. It is not too much to suggest that such a one in the days of David II would readily be impelled to recall to his countrymen the splendour of earlier generations. In 1363 the king abetted by the Earl of Douglas had been prepared to sell the freedom of their country. The fitting comment here is Graeme Ritchie's (Introduction p.192) "That the son of the Bruce and the nephew of the Black Douglas should be willing thus to undo the work of their elders and betters and barter away the national independence so dearly won, came as a shock to the country, which grimly addressed itself again to the task of working off the crushing ransom. It was time, high time, that a poet-historian should arise to retrace the past -

"To put in wryt a suthfast story
That at lest ay furth in memory."

And it was natural that he should spring from the Scottish Church, which had been the sturdiest defender of national independence and had braved the thunders of the Papal See in the cause of an excommunicated King."

Although/

Although considerable disagreement existed concerning such matters as the Barbour canon and the state of the texts there always was and still is a remarkable unanimity in the appraisals of the "Brus" as literary achievement. It is perhaps on this account that writers of general histories of literature have been far too ready to forget that Scottish literature existed before Barbour or to dismiss the early work as entirely unimportant. Even Professor Saintsbury in "A Short History of English Literature" fails to keep a true perspective. In discussing the question of the first known poet of Scotland he says "That position assigned by tradition or imagination, first to Thomas of Erceldoune, and then to the still more shadowy "Huchowne" belongs intrinsically to John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, and author of the "Brus" which was finished in 1375..... At any rate whether it be strange or not that we have nothing earlier than Barbour, the author of the "Brus" is a fact and indisputable." Posterity has granted to Barbour that he should be without "end of life"; literary historians have made him a Scottish Melchizedec by denying him "beginning of days". Yet his poetical parentage is no mystery; he does not emerge from the void; his lineage is in the records of his country's literature

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and history. The work of Huchowne stands in great need of revaluation not only for its own sake but for the sake of Scottish literature. When this is done it will be no longer possible to write as T.F.Henderson who declares that, "Like the greater Chaucer, Barbour had no poetic predecessor worthy of the name". There is a sense, of course, in which the "Brus" can be regarded as a turning point in the history of Scottish literature. The use of the octosyllabic couplet and the abandonment of alliterative verse for such a work constitute a definite change. A pronouncement such as the following from T.F.Henderson's "Scottish Vernacular Literature" is however a dangerous half-truth. "Barbour is virtually the father of Scottish literature, just as Chaucer is the father of English literature; but with the proviso that he is not in the same plane of greatness with Chaucer who further was regarded as their master by certain later Scottish poets." It must be admitted that so far as the change from the old to the new in prosody is concerned, the comparison holds but in many respects in the absence of further provisos it is definitely misleading. Chaucer's work was done when the literary tradition borrowed from France almost three centuries before, was moribund and his genius provided a new manner to be adopted by his successors. In Scotland the romance tradition/

tradition was still active and Barbour's contribution consisted in providing for a well-used mould new material from the valued memories of heroic deeds of national achievement. By its very nature, his work could not be imitated frequently. The new themes capable of treatment in the romance manner were few and consequently apart from the "Wallace" we find no work in early Scottish literature of the same type. Rendering in living words a hero king's vicissitudes and triumphs his service to posterity was not the production of new art forms but the creation of a national heritage. Barbour founded no school, initiated no movement; his virtue found expression in the adaptation of the old rather in the making of the new.

Different estimates have been made of the historical value of the poem but of late years these have become more and more favourable, the only exception being Sir Herbert Maxwell's whose suspicions concerning Barbour's integrity have frequently been regretted and condemned. Wyntoun's Chronicle, which was written between twenty-five and thirty years after the death of Barbour, accepts the historical value of "The Brus", according to the standard adopted by the Prior of St.Serf's, and regards the early poem as having dealt adequately with the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The most noteworthy testimony

to/

to the historical value of the poem in modern times is that of Bain in his Introduction to the "Calendar Documents relating to Scotland" Vol.III His opinion first quoted by Skeat has been repeated in almost every criticism of the Northern poet. It is important to remember that the work is meant to be a historical romance and that considerations of artistic effect were allowed to modify the resolve expressed at the beginning of the poem,

"To put in wryt a suthfast story"

It is worth noticing also that the influence of the French romances on the "Brus" does not destroy its historical value. The kind of life led by Bruce and his lieutenants was not so different from that of the heroes of the chansons de geste.

The poem itself is practically a series of incidents lacking a general plot; this was almost unavoidable since the intention was to produce a chronicle of the deeds of Bruce and Douglas. Applying the canons of aesthetic criticisms the lack of plot is however the greatest weakness of the poem. In the earlier part, Barbour working through a series of incidents builds up a climax to which they are loosely related in his rendering of the battle of Bannockburn and thereafter the poem loses any dominating theme until the noble and sustained death scene at the close.

Barbour/

Barbour could not be expected to make a well-balanced poem from a life story whose course had fourteen years to run after its greatest triumph was attained but from an artistic although not from a historic point of view his work would have been more satisfactory if he had given less notice to the Irish exploits of Edward Bruce. For the most part the charge of failure in construction can be answered by emphasising the historical aspect of the poem but such a rebuttal is no counter against the well-founded accusation of digression. It is one of the glories of Barbour that he can tell a story in a graphic manner and that he resisted the temptation to prolixity which was the besetting sin of his literary ancestors and contemporaries. Occasionally however he permits himself to leave the main trend of narrative to discourse on prophecy and astrology or on the changes of Fortune or to supply an instance from classical literature as in the story of Tydeus. As compared with the writers of traditional romance Barbour exercises a critical judgment which prevents indulgence in the easy meanderings of his precedessors. His treatment of incidents is characterised by that purposefulness which is necessary for clear narrative. His Bannockburn is an excellent piece of work although the writer exercises more patience over details than/

than he can expect from his reader. Apart from the battle books and the death scene, the stirring incidents of single-handed combat and the various stratagems used by Douglas and Bruce for capturing fortresses from the English, constitute the finest parts of the poem. It is a tribute to Barbour's skill in the telling of adventurous incident, that apart from the famous apostrophy to Freedom a wide variety of choice has been used by the anthologists and literary critics. The fault of exaggeration which is found at its worst in his reckoning of the English forces with whom the Scots do battle is unfortunately not absent in those tales of the king's personal heroism but in the latter, Barbour usually gives a better account of the struggle for victory than in the former. The poet leaves no doubt as to the vigour and wholeheartedness of his hero in these encounters. The debris of the royal battle rarely consists of intact corpses, the field is strewn with limbs and "harnys". A good example is the attack by the three men of Lorn when Bruce was covering the retreat of his small band.

Bk. III (11.107-146)

Thai abaid till thpt he was
Entryt in ane narow place,
Betwix a louchside and a bra;
That wes sa strait, ik wnderta,
That/

That he mycht nocht weill turn his sted.
Then with a will till him thai yede;
And ane him by the bridill hynt:
Bot he raucht till him sic a dynt,
That arme and schuldyr flaw him fra.
With that ane othir gan him ta
Be the lege, and his hand gan schute
Betwix the sterap and his fute;
And quhen the king felt thar his hand,
In sterapys stythly gan he stand,
And strak with spuris the stede in hy;
And he lansyt furth delyuerly,
Swa that the tothir failyeit fete;
And Nocht-for-thi his hand wes yeit
Wndyr the sterap, magre his.
The thrid with full gret hy, with this
Rycht till the bra-syd he yeid,
And stert be-hynd him on his sted.
The king wes then in full gret press;
The quhethir he thocht, as he that wes
In all his dedys awise,
To do ane owtrageous bounte.
And syne hyme that behynd hym was,
All magre his will, him gan he ras
Fra be-hynd hym; thocht he had sworn,
He laid hym ewyn him beforn.
Syne with the suerd sic dynt hym gave,
That he the heid till the harnys clave.
He rouschit doun off blude all rede,
As he that stound feld off dede.
And then the king, in full gret hy,
Strak at the tothir wigorusly,
That he eftir his sterap drew,
That at the fyrst strak he him slew.
On this wis him delyuerit he
Off all thai felloun fayis thre."

This passage is one of a number all of which display the poet's ability to tell his story in a straight-forward fashion. The simplicity of the manner adopted is not by any means an index of artistic weakness. Barbour sheds all the unnecessary trappings. His vocabulary is not extensive/

extensive and consequently he is apt to harp on a word or a phrase unduly. A notable example is found in the early part of the Fourteenth Book.

Line 73 "That thai thar fais ruchit all."

Line 78 "That thair fais sua ruschit war."

Line 200 "Till rusche thair fayis in the ficht."

Line 305 "That gret hoost roydly ruschit wes."

His verse runs smoothly and with a correctness not found in his predecessors. Before passing on to questions of the more general characteristics of the poem it is worth while noticing that he shows a tendency to anticipate the ending in several episodes. Thus at the beginning of the excellent story of the "Douglas larder" he says (Bk.V ll 262-266)

"For gude begynnyng and hardy,
And it be followit vittely,
May ger oftsis unlikely thing
Cum to full endyng.
So did it her."

Thus again when John of Lorn undertakes to avenge the death of his five men by slaying the king, the poet explains

"Bot othir wayis the gammyn yude"

The apparent lack of artistry is explained when it is remembered that Barbour was writing bearing in mind an audience that would be familiar with the outcome of these events./

events. In these reminders of ultimate success the poet is inviting his ~~heroes~~ readers to join him in enjoyment of the anticipated success.

The "Brus" is distinguished by its chivalric tone. The poet has an eye for the noble and the good in friend and foe alike and is ever ready to pay honour to knightly conduct. Time and again he praises the deeds of the enemy. Sir Giles de Argentine who rode single-handed against Edward Bruce and his company at the close of Bannockburn receives high compliment. (Bk.XIII ll 321,322).

"He wes the thrid best knyght, perfay,
That men wist leffand in his day."

Tribute is also paid to

"Schir Henry of Bowme the worthy,
That wes ane gud knyght and hardy. (Bk.XII 29-30)

A nameless hero in the English ranks is celebrated in a manner usually reserved for King Robert himself. His victim was one of the company under the militant Bishop William of Dunkeld who forced the cowardly Earl of Fife to make good his Guardianship while Bruce was in Ireland. (Bk.XVI ll 645-654)

"Thar did ane Ynglis man, perfay,
A weill gret strynth, as I herd say.
For quhen he chassit wes to the bat,
A Scotts man, that hym handlyt hat,
He hynt than by the armys twa;
And, war him weill or war him wa,
He/

He evin upon his bak him flang,
And with hym till the bat can gang,
And kest him in, all magre his.
This wes ane weill gret strynth, i-wis."

The poet's chivalric attitude was not confined in its expression to this generous treatment of the national enemy. He was continually emphasising the worthiness of valour and on one occasion made "worship" the theme of a digressing laudation. At the times when the Bruce and his company were outlaws hunted on the hills, the women were always safeguarded from danger and solicitude on their behalf was deemed important in the royal chivalric code. This kindliness which was repaid in several instances through a mother's surrendering of her sons to the service of Bruce was not confined within the barriers of social class. Barbour selects for special praise the thoughtfulness of Bruce for a humble camp-follower, a laundress who was seized by the pangs of child-birth when the army was about to march. The king halts his forces and orders a tent to be raised for the sufferer and sees that she has women to attend. (Bk.XVI ll 289-292).

"This wes a full gret curtasy,
That sic a kyng and swa mychty
Gert his men duell on this maner
Bot for a full pouir laynder."

Barbour has frequent praise for keeping troth as part of the chivalric code. The defeat of the Scots at Methven Wood/

Wood is explained away by accusing the English of having broken their pledged word not to fight till the next morning. The poet's scorn for such conduct is evident. Apart from these separate instances his love of chivalry is reflected on every page, in his delight in "the stalwart stour", in the order of battle, in all the pomp of war. For treatment of such themes he is rivalled only by Froissart. Barbour's debt to the earlier Romances is apparent not so much in the borrowing of incidents as in the attitude he adopts towards the events. It is true that on occasion he allows his patriotism to distort his view but even when he exaggerates the strength of the forces opposing his heroes it is never with braggart intent. His patriotism was schooled by the code of the old Romances. The value of this discipline for producing that restraint without which art cannot exist is seen in the contrast with the "Wallace" where neither fact nor art is allowed to confine the patriotic fervour.

A spirit of gentle, sometimes roguish, humour appears from time to time in the poem. During the campaign in Ireland the Scots were cut off from supplies by the Irish king, O'Dymsky who flooded their camp by releasing the waters of a pent-up lock. The poet comments thus,

"He/

"He made thame na guid fest, perfay,
And nocht-for-thi yneuch had thai.
For thouch thame falit of the met,
I warne your weill, thai war weill wet."

Bk.XIV ll 363-366)

A similar instance is found but this time with the tables turned when Douglas and his men come upon a company of three hundred English at meat.

"Thai seruit thame in sa gret wayne
With scherand swerdis and with knyvis,
That weill neir all lesyt thar livis.
Thai had ane felloune entremas (entremet)
For that surcharge to chargeand was."

The English force had originally intended to cut down Jedwood Forest. After this bloodthirsty onslaught the remnant who escaped departed hurriedly homewards,

"The forest left thai standand still."

The best known example is the exclamation of the Earl of Wasenne whose foragers scoured the countryside and secured a single cow. (Bk.XVIII ll 283-285)

"This is the derrest beiff that I
Saw euir yeit; for sekirly
It cost ane thousand pund and mair."

Barbour appears to us as the man of affairs, scholarly and tolerant, proud of his national heritage yet ungrudging of praise to his enemies, kindly in humour, chivalrous and enamoured of noble enterprise. Above all else he was the poet of patriotism. The "Brus" in itself affords him the title/

title and his claims may be substantiated by "The Stewartis Orygynalle" and perhaps also by "St.Machar". Living at a time when the period of national success was a precious memory whose intrinsic worth was enriched for him by the comparative failure of his own day he gave lasting expression to the consciousness of nationhood then developing which was to furnish the inspiration if not the theme of his literary heirs and successors. He created for his own purpose a work whose claims to be the national epic are not equalled or surpassed, by combining the patriotism of the old songs with the chivalry of the old romances. The national aspirations of his country were centred in the Crown; no other institution existed in his day acceptable to all estates. It was almost inevitable that the poet of developing nationalism should find his theme in the deeds of the greatest of the royal line for the cause of his country's freedom. The time had not yet come for more subtle expressions of love of homeland; national consciousness had only begun to develop. His most notable contribution to Scottish literature was a restrained and chivalric patriotism that found its subject not in the natural beauties of Scotland nor in national traits of character but in something much more obvious - the story of a national hero.

Appeal may be made to Graeme Ritchie (Introduction p.221)

The/

The authenticated works - the "Buik", the "Ballet", the "Brus", the "Stewart's Original", alias the "Brut" - assume a perfect unity under one compelling cause, the master-force of Barbour's life, the desire to bring the resources of History, Romance, Chivalry, Legend and picturesque Genealogy to the support of the Scottish throne.....
It was Barbour's destiny - and it was his intention, however dimly felt - to revive the drooping spirits of his fellow-patriots and foster the growing sense of Scottish nationality by depicting a glorious past. The means to that end was provided by his own natural tendency to associate national feeling with kingship (hence his chill silence on Wallace); in a more material sense, it was provided by his experience as a translator." *

The next figure who appears in the developing literature of Scotland is Andrew of Wyntoun, Prior of St. Serf's, and canon/

* Neilson "John Barbour; Poet and Translator" p.57.

"New gateways are opening into the history of literary Scotland in the second half of the fourteenth century, when men served as translators their apprenticeship to original song - served it now as alliterative craftsmen, the Exchequer table of the Stewart kings - and left behind, however dim their personal memories, a series of splendid achievements in the nascent literature of the North."
(now with octosyllabic verse, perhaps even as they sat side by side)

canon regular of St. Andrews, compiler of the Original Chronicle. The facts concerning Wyntoun are those given by himself in the Prologue to the first book together with some scanty references in the Register of the Priory of St. Andrews and three of confirmatory value in the Vatican archives. Unlike the previous writers, Wyntoun and his work have never become subjects for great critical controversy . He took the wise precaution of stating in the most unambiguous fashion his name and office declaring his intention in so doing.* His intention was apparently the modest one of shielding anyone from being accused of making his chronicle but the actual outcome has been the merciful prevention of critical encounters over his personality and work. If any complaint is to be made regarding the treatment of Wyntoun it is not that too many shafts have/

* (Bk.I Prologue ll 83-94)

"And for I will nane beire the blame
Off my defalt this is my name
Be bapteme Andro of Wyntoune,
Off Sanct Androis a channoune
Regular, bot nocht forthy
Off thame all the leste worthy;
Bot of thare grace and thare fawour
I wes but merit maid priour
Off the Inche within Lochlevin,
Berand tharof my titill evin
Off Sanct Androis diocy,
Betwix the Lummondis and Wynarty."

have been splintered on his account but that too few champions have placed lance in rest in his honour. The fact that there are nine manuscripts of his work extant, the earliest belonging to the beginning of the sixteenth century, is in itself evidence of ~~the~~ his popularity ~~of his work~~. Historians have used the material of his chronicle freely especially for those years at the beginning of the fifteenth century, for which other sources of information are few and of no great fullness. It is strange then that the manuscripts themselves have endured so much neglect and that a satisfactory edition of his Chronicle appeared for the first time in complete form only in 1914. The late F.J.Amours who was responsible for this edition (S.T.S) declared in 1902 that "Wyntoun has not been well used by his editors". His own painstaking studies and enthusiasm for Wyntoun have since then made good the deficiency but his death before the completion of his work deprived students of early Scottish literature of a scholarly assessment of the literary and historical value of the work to which he was so devoted. Any discussion here of the various manuscripts and of the editions of Macpherson and Laing could only take the form of a summary of Amours' account contained in his introduction. No great benefit would accrue/

accrue either from a statement of the sources used by Wyntoun and traced with the greatest thoroughness by his latest editor. Suffice it to say that the chronicler in spite of his complaint about the lack of material has exacted tribute from lay and secular literature of his own and classical times. Amours motices among other sources in addition to the Bible, Petrus, Comestor, Orosius, Martinus Polonus, Honorius Vincent of Beauvais, the Golden Legend, Aelred of Rievaulx, Henry of Huntingdon, Barbour's Brus together with various Scottish chronicles from which information and sometimes actual excerpts were borrowed. The conclusion reached by J.T.T.Brown and J.Neilson who were responsible for the biography (Introduction p.40) is as follows: "Scrupulous and anxious in his own pursuit of accuracy (from which his lapses are, on the whole, surprisingly rare), he is a charitable and gentle critic of the historical fallibility of the authors he followed..... The autobiographic impression left is that of a true and ardent historian, a solid though not showy workman of letters, and a thoroughly capable and shrewd but placid and genial, personality." The latter part of the fourteenth century and the early years of the fifteenth are distinguished by considerable activity on the part of the chroniclers.

John/

John Fordun who died about 1388 prepared a Latin chronicle tracing the history of Scotland from the earliest beginnings to the middle of the twelfth century and leaving the Gesta Annalia to continue the story till within about two years of his death. Bower who revised and continued Fordun was a young contemporary of Wyntoun and apparently did most of his literary work from about 1440 to 1449. He remained faithful to the books completed by Fordun but expanded the Annals by using information which was probably not available to Fordun. Wyntoun also borrowed from Fordun making special use of his material for the period immediately before the War of Independence. Thereafter he makes appeal to the "Brus". When he approaches the reign of David II he finds his information in a chronicle of unknown authorship which was later used by Bower. In the Eighth Book l.2956 Wyntoun says -

"Befor hym he reddy fande
That in the Kynge Dawyis dayis war done
The Broyis, and Robertis his sistyr son.
Qwha that did, he wist richt noucht,
Bot that til hym on casse was browcht."

The existence of several other chronicles associated with the religious houses is a fact concerning which abundant evidence can be found in the Introduction to Wyntoun's Chronicle (S.T.S). It is true to say however that many of these are simply annals dealing with contemporary events, sometimes/

sometimes furnished with "origins" in the manner of Fordun and Wyntoun.

The "Original Chronicle" deserves ~~the~~ special treatment as the most ambitious of the accounts made in the period and its right can be substantiated by such other important considerations as its relation to the "Brus", its compendious nature, its priority as a complete history in the vernacular and its value as evidence of developing national consciousness. Before proceeding to a consideration of some of its qualities it is important to notice that the production of other chronicles in addition to Wyntoun's may well be taken as an indication of a growing desire to find a worthy place in world history for the nation then in process of creation. These origins of the Scottish people and Barbour's "Stewartis Orygynalle" find their inspiration in a common source the nature of which was made apparent by the rest of the Archdeacon's poetical work. It was becoming more certain as the years passed that the significance of the achievements in the War of Independence lay not in the political results which were soon diminished almost to the point of extinction but in the memories enshrined in the popular gests recited throughout the country and in the more valued treasury of the "Brus". It is not surprising that in the late four-

teenth/

fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the history of Scotland should be set forth not only in the tongue of the learned but also in the language of the people. It is too much to expect that Wyntoun or any of the chroniclers of his day should reveal patriotism in its full bloom. They are the spokesmen of a people as yet only merging into nationhood and their work is as much a cause as it is an effect of the process. Inspired by the deeds of their countryman they sought to trace the origins of their growing nation in the remotest past, and thus claim if not a primacy over the neighbouring peoples at least an equality with them. Barbour was enthused by the deeds of his hero-king and sang his praises without stint but he possessed none of that sense of exclusiveness which is so often the mark of the zealous patriot. He treated the heroes of England in the chivalric manner in which the romancers dealt with the enemies of an Arthur or a Charlemagne. Wyntoun differs from him in this respect. As a devoted churchman he seemed to find little interest in tourney and battle. Events which would have aroused Barbour's chivalric ardour are treated by his successor merely as facts to be narrated in his usual pedestrian fashion. The happenings of the years made it necessary for Wyntoun to depict siege and/

and assault, battle and tourney but he displays no particular relish for deeds of military enterprise. When he deviates from the original it is frequently to add a note concerning the foundation of an abbey or the appointment of a bishop. His interest in affairs ecclesiastic is revealed throughout the Chronicle. Freed from that chivalric restraint which withheld Barbour from inveighing against the English Wyntoun on at least two occasions reveals his hatred of the national enemy. A glance at the history of the two kingdoms even from the days of Barbour to Wyntoun's own time will account in large degree for the change of attitude when allowance is made for the interests of the two writers. The most notable passage occurs in the course of his account of the capture by the English of the young Prince who was to be James I.

"It is off Inglis natioune
The commoune kend conditioune
Off Trewis the wertew to foryetȝ,
Quhen thai will thaim for wynnyng set,
And reklis of gud faith to be,
Quhare thai can thare advantage se;
Thair may þa band he maid sa ferm,
Than thai can mak thare will thare term.
Set thare be contrare write, wyth seile,
It is thare vice to be oure lele."

The other passage occurs in his relation of the sack of Berwick when the army of Edward I slew seven thousand five hundred Scots on Good Friday.

"Thus/

"Thus that Kyng of Ingland,
Nocht kyng bot a fell tyrand
Led that day his devotyown.
He gert thare thole the passyown
Off dede mony a creature
In-til gratyous state and pure,
Clene schrewyn, in gud entent
Redy to tak thare sacrament.
Hys offyce wes that Gud Fryday
Till here innocentis de and say
"Allace! now, Lord, we cry,
For hym that deyd that day, mercy!"
Nane othir serwys that day herd he,
Bot gert thame slay on, but pete.
The sawlys that he gert slay down thare
He send quhare his sawle nevyrmare
Wes lyk to come, that is the blys,
Quhare alkyn joy ay lestand is."

Wyntoun does not usually evince such fervour but even in the passages quoted it will be observed that he condemns from the point of view of the churchman rather than from that of the patriot. In the course of his narrative he had ample opportunity to break forth into eulogy over the achievements of his people but far from yielding he never appears to be tempted thus to speak. The time had not come for this association of the individual with the fortunes of his nation and even if it had, Wyntoun was not temperamentally suited to be the prophet of the new day. He proceeds at his own jog-trot without betraying an emotion. The kings whom he praises have their deeds and qualities catalogued without much that is self-revealing on the part of writer or subject. As T.F.Henderson says in "Scottish Vernacular/

Vernacular Literature"; "His character-sketches are often very much a mere summary of conventional virtues, and smack mainly of the funereal eulogy." History for Wyntoun was a series of unrelated happenings uncharged by human feeling, a panorama of incoherent scenes. As Eyre-Todd says in his "Early Scottish Poetry" (p.102) "The reader will look through the "Chronykil of Scotland" almost in vain for the excitement of a dramatic situation, the contrast and climax of human emotion. Hardly at all will he find that focussing of objects to their most interesting point of view which distinguishes a picture from a map, the work of the artist from the work of the artisan." The lack of strong attachments which was probably the cause of this failure to emphasise the more human and individual aspects of the events recorded, added some value to the work as history if not as literature. It is so also with his credulity. Because he was so uncritical, because he had no particular thesis to support, he was the more ready to present to posterity the material that came to his hand. His credulity however has a literary as well as a historical value. Some of the best incidents from the point of view of literary quality would never have been recorded by a more sophisticated writer. His version of the Macbeth story/

story is an excellent example; a less famous one is that noted by Henderson, concerning the sheepstealer who was proven guilty (by the most incontrovertible evidence) in the presence of St.Serf.

"The schape thare bletyd in hys Wame."

Taking the work as a whole it does not reach a high level of literary achievement but it hardly merits at least the latter part of J.H.Millar's summing-up (a Literary History of Scotland p.21) "We do not say that there may not be passages in Wyntoun in which he rises to the height of his great argument. But they are assuredly few and far between. Most of his verse to be quite frank is doggerel." Although F.J.Amours left no general estimate of Wyntoun's work, his study of the text revealed that the chronicler has suffered ill-usage at the hands of his transcribers, and while they cannot be held entirely accountable for the 'doggerel' found by J.H.Millar, Amours was apparently of the opinion that they made matters worse. The significance of the "Original Chronicle" lies however not in its intrinsic qualities but in its indicative value, in its revelation of a trend in national life and literature. The general theory presented in these pages that the literature of Scotland in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries found its/

its inspiration not in Chaucer but in the developing national consciousness receives ~~no~~ strong support from T.F. Henderson's short statement on Andrew of Wyntoun (in his "Scottish Vernacular Literature" p.56). The quotation may be accepted not only as testimony for the general theory, but as the clearest summary of the present writer's attitude to Barbour and Wyntoun, "Andrew of Wyntoun's "Orygynalle Chronykil of Scotland" is like "The Bruce" of Barbour, the product of the exulting sense of nationality inspired by the permanent triumph of Robert the Bruce. It is indited to set forth the glory and honour of Scotland as an independent kingdom. But while the aim of Barbour is to quicken the sentiment of patriotism by a recital of the illustrious achievements of Scotland's deliverer, Wyntoun's main purpose - like that of his contemporary Latin chronicler, Fordun - is to justify the claims of Scotland to an independent nationality by an appeal to the authority of antiquity, by a recital of the history of the Scottish nation from the earliest dawn of tradition."

At this stage in the discussion it is convenient to depart from the chronological order which has been followed and while not losing sight of the main trend of Scottish literature it will be advisable to complete the account of a line of advance which must be regarded as secondary. The next/

next poet in succession to Barbour and Wyntoun is James I. His work is not so intimately associated with the work of his predecessors as is that of another group of poets who though later in time were nearer to the authors of the "Brus" and the "Chronicle" than to the royal poet in the kinship of letters. The most important member of this new group is the all but mythical Blind Harry who has for companions men of little known life and fortune. While some of their work was done about the middle of the fifteenth century most of it belongs to the latter half but it is continued in adapted form beyond the limits of our period. Its literary value apart from the "Wallace" may not be considerable but it played an important part in the destruction of worn out forms and in the preparation for the coming of the new.

It has already been shown that Barbour was thoroughly acquainted with the romance technique and that his major work is an application of methods learned through reading and actual translation. It has been pointed out also that Wyntoun was thoroughly acquainted with romances and offered praise for those who like Huchowne had wrought them in English. The testimony of these men is sufficient

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to show that at the end of the fourteenth century the romance tradition was still strong. It is indeed most probable that it lingered on to a much later period in the North than in the South where Italian influences introduced by Chaucer and others destroyed the literary forms which had been accepted for three centuries. It is impossible to trace the effect of Chaucer's work on the popularity of romances in Scotland but the student of the Northern popular poetry of the mid and late fifteenth century will probably agree that it is easy to discern the decline of romance literature in work that is certainly not modelled on the English master. The fact appears to be that in Scotland the appearance of the fabliau, a form of literature in which the genius of the people would find ready expression, was as spontaneous in occurrence as a literary novelty ever can be. It is not necessary to look to "Sir Thopas" for an explanation of "Ralph Collier". Barbour may be regarded as the last of the great romancers and his success is due to the fact that he found new matter for the old form. His poem by its very nature could not set a new fashion. The possibilities of the patriotic romance were strictly limited and soon exhausted. It is not necessary to assert that only one possibility remained,

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a national epic centred about Wallace. Eyre-Todd for example suggests that Wyntoun might have found a subject in the history of the Scottish Church.* Other subjects concerning the deepest life and experience of the nation might well have been chosen but at best the list available is by no means lengthy. But circumstances other than the poverty of material account for the absence of a school of national poets singing the fame of their heroes. The national development made men consider their country in the present as well as in the past and turned their eyes to emblems of nationhood less obvious than the kings of their day or the heroes of the years gone by. If the development of the fabliau, the restricted material and the new orientation of patriotism in the fifteenth century are taken into consideration it is not surprising that the "Brus" is followed by only one other national poem of epical interest.

It/

* "Early Scottish Poetry" p.131. "It may be said that the opportunity lay to his hand, as an ecclesiastic familiar with the sources of information, to write a great epic of the Scottish Church, displaying behind the events of history that Church's rise to power among the estates of the realm."

It is difficult to see in the humorous narrative poetry of the fifteenth century a definite attempt at parodying the older romances. If such was the intention of these "makars" it would probably be readily apparent, for obviously the whole point of the parody would be missed if the references to the original were not fairly clear. The history of the humorous story has probably a longer past in Scotland than can be proven from the records. It is not safe to argue from the later work but the very richness in narrative of the fabliau type of Northern literature may at least suggest the probability that this type is a long established growth. The quality of the earliest extant examples also suggests that these humorous tales are not being told in newly discovered forms. The most famous of these stories are "Ralph Collier", Cockelbie's Saw" and Hollands "Howlat"; although the first named is not the oldest in the group (circa 1470 according to Amours) it deserves special treatment because of its relation to the older romances. Unlike many of the poems of this period "Ralph Collier", to modernise its title, has obtained kindlier editorial treatment than the majority of its contemporaries which have gone unfriended since Laing issued his first collection in 1822 of "Select

Remains/

Remains". F.J.Amours in his "Alliterative Poems" published in the Scottish Text Society gave to the study of this poem his scholarly care and elucidated many obscure points. As Scott in his Introduction to Ivanhoe says, speaking of his story of Richard and Friar Tuck, "The general tone of the story belongs to all ranks and all countries, which emulate each other in describing the rambles of a disguised sovereign who, going in search of information or amusement into the lower ranks of life, meets with adventures diverting to the reader or hearer from the contrast betwixt the monarch's outward appearance and his real character."

It is not necessary here to enter upon a general disucssion of the merits of the poem nor to add to these pages by re-telling the story in the fashion of the writers on history of literature. Certain points are important for the present purpose. It is worth noting for instance that Ralph Collier is associated with the earlier Northern romances. The suggestion, which has already been remarked, that it was a parody of these old alliterative tales is itself an indicator of relationship although it is here contended that the resemblances in point of fact are too remote and uncertain to justify the theory. There can be no/

no doubt however that in metre and even in vocabulary the author of "Ralph Collier" owed a debt to the earlier romances. In this connection F.J.Amours in his Introduction to his volume of Alliterative Poems has an interesting suggestion to make which if not entirely convincing in its intent may be taken as evidence of relationship.* The earlier scenes enacted in the collier's cottage are opposed to the spirit of the romance but the later passages describing Sir Ralph's combat with Magog the emissary of the Khan of Tartary and recounting the intervention of Sir Rolland are entirely in the manner of the older gests. The poem really belongs to the transition type. The poet in telling his story has not conformed to certain of the older conventions but on the other hand he has made no attempt to ridicule the chivalric usages of the earlier writers. It is worth while going on to consider the nature of his deviations from the accepted fashion of the romancers. The most important change is in choice/

* (Introduction p.36). "The narrative in the second part so strikingly resembles the fighting scenes in "Golagros" and the vocabulary of the two poems has so many terms in common, especially words not used in any other part of this volume, that one feels inclined to ascribe both works to the same author. At any rate during the compilation of the Glossary I have seen many reasons for believing that the author of "Rauf Coilyear" was acquainted with the Knightly Tale which therefore must be a few years earlier."

choice of character. The admission of the peasant into a place of prominence especially of such a peasant as the robust if not churlish Ralph Collier meant the end of courtesy and chivalric deportment and when the dignity of the old order disappeared room was left for comedy even of the popular knock-about order. Romance in Scotland in the literary sense, ended not because of ridicule or direct attack but because new elements were introduced which gradually altered its character. In the end the result was such as to justify the parallel of "new wine in old bottles". It is not suggested that the introduction of characters below the order of knighthood was the sole cause of the disappearance of romance, but it seems likely that this departure played an important part in the decline. Another deviation from the conventional was the introduction of horse-play incidents, intimately associated with the new characters. The romancers had not stinted themselves in the matter of casualties in depicting their combats but they had all displayed an enthusiasm for a military decorum, the rules of the game. In Ralph Collier the poet deliberately violates the chivalric usages in his whole-hearted buffets, and the interest of the poem really centres round the contrast between the courtly conventions and the new royal experience/

experience. Line 168.

"The king said to himself: 'This is an euill lyfe
Yet was I never in my lyfe thus gat leird
And I have oft tymes bene quhair gude hes bene ryfe
That maist couth of courtasce in this Christin eird.
Is nane sa gude as lief of, and mak na mair stryfe
For I am stonischit at this straik, that has me thus steird."

With the introduction of comedy of the new order the fate of the conventional romance was settled. The comedy however took the form of rough and tumble incident rather than of deliberate parody.

Perhaps the most interesting departure from the conventional in narrative poetry of the Ralph Collier type is its introduction of characters which are definitely Scottish. The poem under consideration supplies some excellent examples. There could be no mistaking the nationality of the Collier himself. He belongs to the type which led Froissart at a later day and Aeneas Sylvius to note the boldness of the Scottish peasantry. In his sturdy independence, rough humour, crude hospitality, which prizes no refinement or nicety of ceremony, and in his pride in the mastery of his own household, Ralph proclaims his nationality. It has been suggested by Scott, Amours, Henderson and others that the poem is an adaptation of a Norman original is probably correct but the "makar" has certainly not followed his/

his copy closely in characterisation. The scenery of the poem far from being a reproduction of the mediaeval "Never-never land" is drawn from the poet's native country His description of the Winter storm, for example, is the work of one who had tholed the "wickit wedderis" of the North. L.14 -

"And as that Ryall raid ouir the rude mure,
Him betyde ane tempest that tyme, hard I tell;
The wind blew out of the East stiflie and sture,
The deip durandlie draif in mony deip dell;
Sa feirslie fra the Firmament, sa fellounlie it fure,
Thair micht na folk hald na fute on the heich fell."

The scene within the collier's hut with the King, Ralph and Gill seated where

"Ane bricht byrnand fyre was byrnand full bald."

again belongs to the North. As Amours says, "The only foreign element is the setting or framework of the story; the storm among the mountains and fells, the rough handling of Charlemagne by his churlish subject are not compatible with a French source." This interest in Scottish life and character which other critics besides Amours have found in "Ralph Collier" is indeed one of the most important departures from the customs of the early romances.

Cockelbie's Saw/

*T.F.Henderson, "Scottish Vernacular Literature" p.79. "The poet has really given it a Scottish setting. Though the scene is laid in France, the muir is a Scottish muir; the snawstorm is a right Scottish snawstorm; the collier is an honest but rude, dour and unmannered Scot; and the and/

Cockelbie's Saw" belongs to the same period but it is different in many ways from "Ralph Collier". It lacks intimate association with the earlier romances and may be treated simply as a narrative poem loosely contructed and related not with any clear motive save the desire to tell an interesting tale. It has some pretensions to didacticism but these are often forgotten by the poet especially in his obvious delight at the incidents related. Three separate stories are told dealing with the uses made of each of the three pennies given to Cockelbie in exchange for his saw. Many of the characteristics of "Ralph Collier" appear in accentuated form in "Cockelbie's Saw". The humour in the poem under review is definitely of a "tamer" type, the best example being the Harlots' rout described in tracing the story of the second penny. The members of the rout and the two companies who came to demand justice from them are most certainly Scottish while in the wild dances in which they indulge there are affinities with the ghastly merriment of "Alloway's auld haunted kirk". The prolixity of these verses makes quotation a difficulty but happily at the same time of no/

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humour of the vividly dramatic scenes is Scottish to the core."
J.H.Millar, p.41..... "the best scenes are undoubtedly those which pass under the collier's roof. These are far better than merely mechanical reproductions of conventional situations and the same praise may be awarded to the character of the collier himself, which I venture to think possesses the true Scottish flavour."

no great significance. Suffice it to say that the humour of the poem and the references to Scottish songs and dances reveal an interest in national characteristics.* It should be noticed that in the tale concerning the first penny there are elements of romance, using the term in its modern sense while in the story of the third, the dedactic purpose becomes most manifest. "Cockelbie's Saw" represents a great departure from the spirit of the ancient chivalric romance but the connection is still unbroken. This is particularly evident in the middle portion of the poem. The fact that the poet professes to have learned the story of the second penny from his great-grandmother is the best that can be said in support of the theory that his intention was to mock at the methods and material of the gests.**

The "Buik of the Howlat" which Amours had proved to belong to about 1450, the circa being less generous than in most instances in Scottish literature is of much better literary quality than "Cockelbie's Saw. The story which probably owes something to the "Parlement of Foules" tells how the owl having complained of his ugliness to the Peacock, Pope of the birds, is supplied with the gayest and most variegated plumage through the sacrifice of a feather by each bird at the command of Nature. The possession of this bright dress leads the owl to develop so much pride

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* Carew Hazlitt in his revision of Laing's Select Remains p.180 says that "the poem although referring in its allusions (as Dr. Layden has observed) to local and temporary circumstances which are not obvious at this distance of time, throws much light on the manners and rustic festivities of the Scottish peasantry, during a very early period."

that Nature rescinds the degree, and dooms the foolish bird to wear his sober garb again. Such a story was not likely to afford opportunity for the expression of patriotic sentiment or the display of national characteristics yet these qualities are to be found even through the most casual reading. The poet in discoursing of the array of the Second Estate summoned to assist in the giving of judgment, describes the armour of the Woodpecker attendant on the Eagle Emperor. Among other insignia worn, the poet mentions the Douglas arms and forthwith proceeds to relate the origin of each part. It is true that in recording the later history of the house the poet was dealing with matters concerning which the patriot Scot would have found scant opportunity for eulogy. It is certain, however, that a personal relation existed between him and the Douglas family for proof of which reference can be made to Amours' Introduction to his "Scottish Alliterative Poems," and this may have led the poet to favour the rebellious house. Notice also that Holland lingers over the story of good Sir James and that whatever his later attitude to the sovereign of his own day he had a wholehearted admiration for the Bruce. If the poem was written before 1452 and there is good reason so to think, then it was composed at a time when there was no quarrel between James II. and this powerful family. The point to observe is that Holland pays his tribute to the memory of Robert I. with all the enthusiasm of Barbour even although his later relationships with the throne were anything but friendly. There is a wealth of emotion in his account of Douglas and the

heart of the Bruce not equalled by Barbour and the death-scene is depicted with a poignancy and depth of feeling of which the earlier poet was incapable. "Buik of the Howlat" 1456.

"I love you mair for that loiss ye lappyn me tell,
Than ony lordschipe or land, so me our Lord leid!
I sall wayne for no wye to wirk as ye will,
At wiss, gif my werd wald, with you to the deid."

The evidence of the nationality of the poet is not confined to patriotic outbursts in praise of heroes. Once again there are examples of humour with a Scottish flavour. In the midst of the feasting at the Court of the Eagle, the Rook , "a bard out of Ireland with Bannachadee" appears and insists on telling his lengthy 'lesingis' for which he receives the stern disapproval of the Raven, the Rural Dean. The eloquence of the Bard is turned on the unfortunate interrupter who is thoroughly discomfited. The stanza which follows is reminiscent of Dunbar and bears the national stamp on every line. The stanza which is quoted in full serves the double purpose of illustrating the point and of giving an example of the complicated form of verse structure. l.820.

"In come twa flyrand fulis with a fonde fair,
The Tuchet and the gukkit Golk, and yeid hiddy giddy;
Ruschit baith to the bard, and ruggit his hair;
Callit him thryss thevisnek, to thrawe in a widdy.
Thay fylet him fra the fortope to the fut thar.
The barde, smaddit lyke a smaik smont in a smedy,
Ran fest to the duse, and gaif a gret rair;
Socht wattir to wesche him thar out in ane ydy.
The lordis leuch apon loft, and lyking thai had
That the barde was so bet;
The fulis foude in the flet,
And mony mowis at mete
On the fluse maid.

The humour in this stanza and in the earlier ones descripting the behaviour of the Irish bard is undoubtedly Scottish in type. Scotch traits are not to be found, however, in the description of natural scenery which though lacking in these qualities is nevertheless deemed worthy of praise by Professor Veitch in his study of "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry."

This narrative poetry of a type different from the old romances enjoyed a considerable popularity in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and many instances could be quoted of citations even from the examples here discussed. Gawain Douglas recounting the heroes who appeared in the mirror of Venus says:

> "I saw Rauf Coilyier with his thrawin brow,
> Crabbit John the Reif, and Auld Cowkellpis Son"

Dunbar in an address to James IV. also refers to:

> "Gentill and semple, of every clan,
> Kyne of Rauf Colyear and Johne the Reif."

The same poet mentions one or other of these poems on at least three other occasions while Holland finds a place in the "Lament for the Makaris", and also in Sir David Lyndsay's roll of bards in the "Testament and Complaynt of the Papyngo." These narrative poems ousted the romances from popularity although the process was not complete until after the end of the period presently under review. The lateness of ~~the~~ "Lancelot of the Laik" is in itself sufficient evidence of an interest still living after the romance ballad had been

developed. The chief characteristic of work in this type is its attachment to Scottish scenes and moods. It is still too early to expect from the poets patriotic favour expressed in attachment to national institutions or in an exultant sense at the glories of the country of their birth. But an advance has been made from the patriotism which was little more than the worship of a hero king. Fully recognising the greatness of the past, men were turning from time to time to the Scotland of their own day. They were finding more and more interest in the everyday life of their own people, in their humour, their characteristic modes of thought and expression, their folk lore. As security and justice developed they were growing in appreciation of natural scenery, finding in the countryside greater beauties than they had created in that imagined world of the metrical romances.

The tracing of the history of narrative poetry would carry us far beyond the limits of the period under consideration. The romance ballad in Scotland ~~is~~ later merged into the English form and has remained until modern times. During the fifteenth century it can be regarded as a development from chivalric romances showing many points of resemblance with its original and only gradually acquiring a different technique. How different this particular form became, even before the end of the fifteenth century can be seen in "The Thre Prestis of Peblis" edited by T. D. Robb for the Scottish Texts Society. The Editor accepts for the date of this poem some year between 1484 and 1488.

The first and second stories according to T. D. Robb are political and social satires wherein the policy of James III. in strengthening the power of the Crown is attacked, while the third story is a moral tale undisguisedly didactic. The editor has submitted sufficient proof for his case "that our satirist had a genuine liking for the king while misliking his government." If this reading of the poem is accepted, and no other treatment seems warranted by the evidence, then it appears that towards the end of the fifteenth century the narrative poem derived from the old romance was capable of dealing with contemporary events and matters of national policy in satirical fashion. Even in such a work, however it is easy to discern in the poem the mind of one schooled in the cycles of Arthur and Charlemagne; The author is still the disciple not the master. --- It is not always possible to disentangle the strands of these tales in verse resembling the old romances and of the more original narrative poetry which found a place in the work of the 'Scottish Chaucerians", Henryson and Dunbar particularly furnish examples of the type developed from the old romance but they have also produced narrative poetry different in origin and technique while their claims to poetic greatness can be substantiated by their lyrical and reflective verse which is intensely individual.

The main purpose in this discussion of the development of the romance has been to show that the older form was

breaking down. The recognition that this change was taking place is necessary for a full understanding and appreciation of "the Wallace". The change explains much of the difference in tone between "the Brus" and the later poem which has so often proved the subject of critical discourse. The ascription of the poem to Blind Harry concerning whom biographical material is found in the "Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer", Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris," John Major's "History" and a stanza from "Ane Little Interlude of the Droichis Past of the Play" is traditional but it raises many problems. Doubt has been cast on his blindness and his learning in spite of Major's "a nativitate luminitus captus" and of his own profession

"It is weill knowin I am a burel man."

The main argument in support of this sceptical attitude is to be found in the nature of the poem which with its frequent allusions to and borrowings from a wide range of literary material could not be the work of an uneducated man blind from birth. A close examination of the "Wallace" was made by J.T.T.Brown who conceded nothing more than that Blind Harry was a wandering minstrel whose repertory included certain well-known gests concerning the Scottish hero and who was incapable of writing a poem possessing the many excellencies which he sees in "the Wallace". ("The Wallace and the Bruce Restudied").

"By the organic unity; the minutely particular topography; the Chaucerian and other influence on versification and thought; the extensive acquaintance with Romance literature; the direct

borrowing from chronicles, - by all these we can negative the tradition." His general position is that the recital of the gests by Blind Harry suggested to "the ~~dark~~ clerk John Ramsay a theme for a national epic worthy to be in some measure complementary, to "The Bruce" of John Barbour." Brown seeks support for his theory in the parallel passage argument and attempts to show evidence of redaction through the use of material not available in Blind Harry's time. His portion requires the acceptance of redaction of the "Brus" and considerable borrowing from the "Buik of Alexander", suggestions which have been thoroughly disproved in Graeme Ritchie's edition of the latter work. Brown's theory no longer stands as a fair account of the authorship of the "Wallace" and the "Brus" but unfortunately there is no theory extant which fits all the facts. Various conjectures have been made and in spite of the scorn which Brown poured out on that suggested by T.F. Henderson it still may be treated with respect. In his "Scottish Vernacular Literature" Henderson discusses the literary references in "Wallace" and after surveying the evidence produces the following suggestion:- P.68.

"Born blind, Harry, in all likelihood was dedicated to the office of minstrel from boyhood, and instructed for it by accomplished minstrels. Like other minstrels, he would presumably learn by heart much of the traditional and current poetry of his day; for originally poetry was composed solely for recital, nor did the art of writing ever become so complete a substitute

for recital as the art of printing." There are occasions and this is one of them when the most reasonable judgment to utter is that the evidence is too slight for certitude. In the meanwhile something further can be gleaned from the most important fact of all which is the poem itself written some time between 1450 and 1460.

The "Wallace" is a patriotic romance composed at the time when the chanson de geste was about to disappear in its authentic form. Excluding "Lancelot of the Laik", no single romance of note apart from the imitations of later centuries is placed later than the story of the Scottish hero. The celebration of chivalry after the manner of Barbour was no longer possible. Between the two poems, as we have seen, stretched a century in the latter part of which narrative poetry was written of a type differing from the old romance in tone, incident, setting, and character. Barbour's "Brus" was too late in its appearance to found a school of Northern romancers and besides his theme, as has been remarked already, did not permit of unlimited imitation. When his successor appeared, imitation of the earlier form was impossible. If one of the important changes in the century intervening between the poems was the decline of the chivalric romance, another no less important was the development of nationalism. During the hundred years Scotland had become conscious of nationhood as the result of influences outlined in the beginning of this

discussion. The country had become an entity bound together by attachments both of Government and sentiment. A national tradition of patriotic achievement had been created in the "Brus" and in the many gests from which Blind Harry obtained some at least of his material. These matters are discussed more fully later but in the meanwhile it is to be noted that the nature of the poem and its contrast with the "Brus" can be explained by the decline during the fifteenth century of the chivalric chanson de geste and the development of a strong sense of nationhood.

In approaching the poem the first impression is the change of tone from that found in the "Brus". This can be accounted for in part by the decline of the chivalric romance. No longer do the opponents of the hero meet with the generous praise bestowed on the enemies of Arthur or of Bruce. The poet seldom misses an opportunity of denouncing "The Inglismen, that ever fals has beyne." (Bk. VI.l. 111.) Sir Aymer de Valence who appears as a Scottish traitor is described as subtle and tyrranical, Hesilrig as cruel and keen, Robert Thorn as "a felloun sutell knycht". Their deeds in Scotland before the appearance of Wallace were distinguished by a diabolical cruelty.

Footnote.

The following quotation, like all others, is taken from Moir's Edition for the "Scottish Text Society" :- (Bk.I. ll. 157-166.)

"Thus he conteynde in till hys tendyr age;
In armys syne did mony hie waslage,
Quhen Saxons blud into this realm cummyng,
Wyrkand the will of Eduard that fals king,

Mony gret wrang thei wrocht in this regioune,
Distroyed our lordys, and brak thar byggynnys doun
Both wiffis, wedowis, thai tuk all at thair will,
Nonnys, madyns, quham thai likit to spill.
King Herodis part thai playit in to Scotland,
Off yong childer that thai before thaim fand."

Departures from the chivalric code are by no means confined to denunciation of the misdeeds of the English. Wallace himself is guilty of conduct which the older romancers would never have attributed to their heroes. In the earlier part of his compaign he arrived at Perth where the Provost anxious to exclude evil doers from his city, questioned Wallace and was answered by the merest falsehood. (Bk. IV. ll. 367-368)

"Quhat is your nayme? I pray you tell me it"
"Will Malcomsone," he said, "sen ye wald witt."

His treatment of Fawdoun is an example of a still more questionable deed. The poet himself in attempting to excuse Wallace for the slaying of his comrade while being pursued by a blood-hound, makes matters worse by taking as his first plea for justification that "to the hunde it mycht gret stoppyn be." His manner of receiving English heralds would have raised the ire of Barbour who is almost punctilious in his regard for the conventional usages. Wallace ordered one to be executed, another cut from the root and one to have his eyes to have his tongue torn out. The excuse for this barbarity was that one of the heralds was not wearing his own crest. It is also significant of the passing of romance influence that the poet shows considerable interest in the ordinary soldiery. There are few examples

of praise for the nobles among the opponents of Wallace but on a fair number of occasions the poet lauds the English Archers. An example is found in Bk. IV, ll 555-556.

> "Yȝglis archaris, that hardy war and wicht,
> Amang the Scottis bykkerit with all thair mycht."

There are of course many evidences of the influence of the metrical romances such as the chivalric treatment of women by the Scots but these are not so significant as the deviations from the manner of the chansons de geste. Sufficient has been said to show that the "Wallace" does indeed differ from the "Brus" in its attitude to chivalry. The reason is to be found mainly in the development in the period intervening between the two poems of narrative poetry differing from the early romance in character and incident.

The two poems differ also in their patriotism. The insistence on the perfidy of the English throughout the "Wallace" is not entirely explained by the passing of the romance with its chivalry. A new attitude had developed in the time of Blind Harry. As Professor Saintsbury says in his "History of English Literature," speaking of Blind Harry's work, "By this time the national animosity between Scots and English, according to a custom odd at first sight but not unintelligible, had grown much more fierce than during the actual Wars of Independence in the previous century. And Harry's verses are inspired by the hottest

flame of this." Apart from this "custom" the new attitude of hatred can find an explanation in the events of the late fourteenth century. In the time of Blind Harry much more than in the time of Barbour, the Scots were distinctly separated from the English by a tradition of animosity. The poet of the "Wallace" was distinguished by a patriotism of the most exclusive character. The movement towards nationalism which was almost complete at the end of the fifteenth century is reflected also in Blind Harry's insistence on the justice of the Scottish Cause. He speaks frequently, usually with great fervour, about the righteousness of the Scottish claims (e.g. Bk.lV. l.594 "We haiff the rycht, the happyar may it be.") This popular identification with policy is undoubtedly an evidence of national consciousness. The temper of the times is shown in many passages throughout the poem such as that at the end of the Seventh Book.

> "Scotland was fre that lang in baill had beyne,
> Throw Wallace won fra our fals enemys kene,
> Gret gouernour in Scotland be couth ryng,
> Wayttand a tyme to get his rychtious king
> Fra Inglis men, that held him in bandoune, *
> Lang wrangwsly fra his awn rychtwis crown."

Sentiments like these provide sufficient proof that the development of national consciousness was practically complete, when "Wallace" was composed. The poet made

* See also Bk. Vl 11.910-926; Bk. Vll 11.95-152; Bk. Vlll. 418; Bk.lX 821,822, Bk.Xl. 448.

several attempts at nature description, prefacing several of the books with landscapes. These are conventional in character and are so devoid of real sympathy with the subject, that they have been quoted in support of the claim that Harry was blind from birth. Professor Veitch in "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry" (Vol. 1.L.180-182) selects the scene at the commencement of the Third Book as worthy of special mention. He points out very truly that the poet succeeds in providing material for a contrast with the carriage which follows; while approving of this particular point it is difficult to agree with the rest of the judgment. He says, "There are touches of true feeling for the facts and features of the Scottish land in this picture." Consider even the first four lines:-

> "In joyows Julii, quhen the flouris suete,
> Degesteable, engenered throu the heet,
> Baith erbe and froyte, busk and bewis, braid
> Haboundandlye in every slonk and slaid;"

The impression formed from reading the lines is that they were written not with a Scottish scene in mind but with a fairly clear memory of Chaucerian phrases. Its source is confirmed by the occurrence of lines such as those from the Ninth Book:-

> "Zepherus ek, with his suet vapour,
> He comfort has, be wyrking of natour."

It is strange that the poet who revealed such intimate discipleship, who used the "riding rhyme" more than any

of the makers, and who employed only Chaucerian forms when he departed from this particular structure, should not have bee claimed as one of the Scottish Chaucerians. Perhaps the quality of his work was too poor to make it worth while including him among the progeny of the Father of English Poetry, or is it possible that his nationalism is so thoroughly obvious that the literary historians have been forced to concede his work as due to the popular movement?

It is not necessary to produce evidence of Blind Harry's nationalism or to make a laboured statement to the effect that "the power of the moment" in the form of a popular sentiment was active in guiding the expression of his genius. An acquaintance with a single book of the "Wallace" and a knowledge of the history of Scotland in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries will be sufficient to make this part of the thesis clear. The poem is a late romance inspired by a developed patriotism and is readily placed in the scheme of literary development suggested in these pages.

In tracing the development of the Romance and its offshoots throughout the fifteenth century and observing the influence of the developing nationalism on the literary form most characteristic of mediaeval secular poetry, occasion has frequently arisen for pointing out that peculiarly Scottish traits were evident in the later part of the period especially. It will appear in subsequent pages that these

same traits, in developed form, are to be found in the Scottish Chaucerians. It is worth while observing that the theory of Chaucerian discipleship invoked to explain the rise of such men as Henryson and Dunbar fails to take account of the fact that several of the most important qualities of their work were found in the preceding poetry of Scotland or in the contemporaneous work of poets who are not included in the list of Chaucerians. This in itself is an indication that the approach from the poetry of the South while justified on account of the discipleship in form, is most certainly not the only one possible and it is doubtful if it is the best. Much of their work may truly be regarded as a continuation of that development of Scottish literature here traced which found its inspiration in the growing nationalism. The case cannot be proved, however, merely by selecting instances of interest in Scottish affairs or even by relating their work to the immediate past; the question of Chaucerian influence will have to be discussed, especially when dealing with poets like James 1. who owed a considerable debt to the great English master. The general aim will be for the establishing of the thesis that the wealth of poetry in the fifteenth century in Scotland was in the main a by-product of the developing nationalism, that the Scottish Chaucerians were primarily Scottish rather than Chaucerian.

The first of the group is the ill-starred James 1.

who was born in 1394, the third son of Robert 111. It is not necessary to recite here the circumstances which made it advisable for him to be sent abroad. In 1406 Sir David Fleming conducted the Prince to the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth, where he awaited the ship from Leith which was to take him to France. Off Flamborough Head, James was captured by an English vessel and carried off to be the prisoner of Henry 1V. for eighteen years. Henry attended to the education of the young Prince, probably because he had his own ends to serve in doing so. Under circumstances which were somewhat different from those described in the Quair, he met the daughter of the Earl of Somerset, Joan Beaufort, whom he married. Their union was regarded as a happy augury in England for the establishing of profitable relationship between the two countries. On the promise of payment of a heavy ransom, euphemistically called an account for expenses, James returned to Scotland in 1424 and in the same year was crowned. Concerning the achievements of his reign, sufficient has been said to show that the poet-King was no idle dreamer given to soft living and dalliance. The story of his end associated as it is with a deed of romantic bravery, is in itself sufficient evidence of the turbulence which challenged the energy and genius of the ruler.

The question of the authentic work of the first of the Chaucerians is, in spite of the Royal rank of the writer, one that has been bitterly disputed. In his first edition

of "The King's Quair" for the Scottish Text Society, Skeat ascribed to the King "The Ballad of Good Counsel" but refused on internal evidence to admit his authorship of the "Song of Absence," "Peebles to the Play" and "Christ's Kirk on the Green" (See Henderson). In recent years J.T.T. Brown, J.J. Jusserand, T.F.Henderson and Principal Rait, all have discussed the question of the canon, the first named critic raising the problem in its most extreme form by maintaining "The King's Quair" to be an elaborate forgery of the sixteenth century. Without going into details which can be found in the works of the various critics, it will suffice to say that "The King's Quair" and "The Ballad of Good Counsel" have generally been accepted as the work of the Royal poet, while "Peebles to the play" and "Christ's Kirk on the Green" have to be judged as probably by James 1. It will be advisable then, to deal shortly with the two latter poems and give more attention to "The King's Quair." It is generally conceded, even when no final attribution is made, that "Peebles to the Play" and "Christ's Kirk on the Green" came from the same pen. Apart from the linguistic similarities, the two poems resemble each other closely in subject and tone, with this difference that "Christ's Kirk" is the more rollicking. A single example will serve the important purpose of showing how true the poems are to the type of Scottish humorous extravaganza. The following stanza is taken from the scene of wild hilarity towards the

end of the poem.

"The wyvis kest up ane hiddous yell,
Quhen all thir yunkeris yokkit,
Als ferss as ony fyr-flaucht fell,
Freikis to the field thay flokkit:
The cairlis with clubbis cowd uder quell,
Quhill blud at breistis out bokkit.
So rudly rang the common bell,
Quhill all the stepill rokkit
For reird,
At Chrystis Kirk of the grene."

If these poems are to be accepted as the work of James 1. then a new estimate of the king's achievement must be made wherein less prominence is given to his discipleship to Chaucer. Whoever their author, these poems possess a verve which is unmistakably Scottish. The right comment on them is made by Henderson in his "Scottish Vernacular Literature." He says, "Neither as poems nor as pictures of humours of rustic life are they equalled by Tennyson, nor without them would we probably have had much that is best in Burns."

In "The Ballad of Good Counsel" James pays homage to the other-worldliness which characterised so much of the work of his predecessors. The virtues of faith and humility extolled in the earlier centuries are here praised after the fashion of "Flee from the Press." The inclusion in the canon of this poem, which is just an ordinary example of a type common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, makes no great difference to the poetical reputation of the first James.

The King's Quair is autobiographical in character

although its decorations take from it any claim to 'suthfastnes'. The author's indebtedness to Chaucer can scarcely be overestimated for he borrowed much and imitated more in regard both to form and content. His poem is largely composed of elements from the Roman de la Rose. All the conventions established by the many imitators of the French Romance are found here. The Dream, the Vision, the Deadly Sins, the Wheel of Fortune, the Love-romances are all observed. In the course of the fairly elaborate education which James received, he would be introduced to that happy hunting ground of Mediaeval romances and it is just probable that the royal poet became acquainted with this work through Chaucer's translation. Even if this were not true, James' acquaintance-:ship with Chaucer, a fact which is otherwise established apart from any appeal to the Roman, would lead him to use the conventions which his master adopted so readily. Taking the probabilities into consideration, it seems certain that if James did not actually learn the conventions through Chaucer's translation of the Roman, his use of them was influenced, if not actually determined, by the fact that his master used them. The royal discipleship may be even more readily established by an appeal to the incidents he relates. As T.H.Ward says in his introduction to Chaucer in "The English Poets","His nineteen years of captivity allowed him to steep himself in Chaucer's poetry and any Chaucerian student who reads 'The King's Quair' is constantly

arrested by a line or a stanza or a whole episode that exactly recalls the master." Many instances of parallel episodes might be mentioned. Two of these cited by Ward are so clear as to be undeniable; these are the Ascent to the Empire of Venus and Minerva's Discussion of Free Will, imitated from Chaucer's rendering of the same theme after Boethius in "Troëlus and Criseyde." Further evidence of the King's discipleship is to be found in the minuter matter of imitation of lines and phrases. James was so familiar with his Chaucer that apparently unconsciously he reproduced many of his lines.

Further evidence of the relationship between Chaucer and King James is to be found in considering the grammar of the Quair. Skeat points out that the royal poet "does not strictly observe the grammar used in the Lowlands of Scotland but often adopts many of the inflections of the Midland dialect of Chaucer, evidently considering him as furnishing the true model of literary form. Hence his poem is by no means, as has been supposed, an example of Northern English; it exhibits a purely artificial dialect such as probably was never spoken." The indebtedness of this first of the Scottish Chaucerians must appear greater from a consideration of metre. The stanza form used is of course Rhyme Royal and is probably borrowed from Troilus and and Criseyde. The ease and perfection of the numbers suggest a very full acquaintanceship with Chaucer's work. It will

be seen from what has been said that the royal poet had submitted himself to a very complete discipline under his literary master, but his poem is after all something more than a mere reproduction of his master's material and style. It is a matter of considerable ease to count up borrowings from one poet by another, a fact that may explain the amount of such literary arithmetic done in the name of criticism; what is more difficult is to make an estimate of the peculiar quality that is important either in itself or in the history of literature in the poet's work. Before making an attempt at the latter it will be well to consider the poem itself. The Quair opens in the conventional fashion with the poet lying awake, oppressed with sleeplessness. He takes from a bookshelf a volume that will readily induce sleep - Boethius' "De Consolatione Philosophiae". As he reads therein concerning the vicissitudes that befell the philosopher and of his means for overcoming them, he thinks of his own life and of his present state of thraldom. At this point he mentions, somewhat needlessly, that he has spent much ink to little purpose, so he resolves to turn over a new leaf, and in order to make a good beginning with the second attempt, starts off with a Cross. This proceeding makes little difference to the poem which continues to ramble on in a lame lament over trials and afflictions, past and present. A change takes place, and here occurs the famous passage wherein the poet tells that when despair had laid hold of him, as he paced his room he was attracted by the song of

the nightingale and glancing out saw Lady Joan Beaufort. He gives a fairly minute description of her appearance and dress. Here follow then, poetical addresses suited to the circumstances; panegyrics are made to Venus, to the nightingale, to the lady, and to the birds who have acted as a kind of grand chorus to the opera. The lady then takes her way and the poet's joy is turned into mourning. Overcome ~~with~~ by grief he falls prostrate, with his head on a stone; this leads him to have what he calls a dream. A great light appears and a voice is heard. He is suddenly caught by the arms and borne up by some invisible power into the Palace of Venus, where he sees the loves of all time assembled. He is lead into the Presence of Venus, and his suit that he should be allowed to see his lady is granted but not without conditions. The lover is advised to get wisdom and understanding from Minerva and he is given a guide called Good Hope who is to conduct him to the austere goddess. Soon he reaches her palace and after much wordy discussion, is assured that if his love is truly founded on virtue, she will be his speed. He is counselled to be patient and asked to declare the real nature of his affection. On the necessary assurances being given, he is treated to a sermon on predestination in the manner of Chaucer, is dismissed and reaches the earth. On his arrival he finds himself in a plain and looking round he sees a line of trees, a river full of fish, and a mediaeval menagerie. The lover is now seeking the Goddess Fortune, but his search is unavailing

till his old friend Good Hope appears. The guide leads him to an enclosed space wherein sits Fortune clad in rich ermine, her wheel turns before her and men clamber on to it, some holding the crown of the wheel for a time others being quickly dashed into the pit below. Fortune calls on the poet to make an attempt, whereupon he falls on his knees before her and she, recognising by his weakness that he is a lover, promises assistance. He wakens at this point and proceeds to interpret his dream but his mental meanderings are interrupted by the appearance of a turtle dove who carries a branch on which are written words of encouragement. The result of all this is that he advances his suit to the lady herself and is successful. The poet makes acknowledgements to all who have aided him, including the window in the wall, the nightingale, Fortune and Venus. The Quair ends with an Envoy and an address to Chaucer and Gower.

> Unto the Impnis of my maisters dere,
> Gowere and Chaucer that on the steppis sat
> Of rhetorike, while they were livand here
> Superlative as poetis laureate
> In moralitee and eloquence ornate,
> I recommend my book in linis seven
> And eke their saulis unto the bliss of heaven.
>
> AMEN.

This summary of the poem presents once more the elements which are common to the greater part of mediaeval poetry and might well be consistent with the dullness and insipidity that frequently characterises this kind of production. It still leaves obscure the peculiar graces

of the work and an attempt must now be made to reveal these in some measure. One of the finest passages in the book is that wherein the King sees for the first time the Lady Joan walking in the garden. The peculiar quality revealed here is the power to produce a mood. This is rather different from the faculty that Chaucer has of reproducing a dramatic situation; Chaucer puts his characters into situations which must call forth their personalities and in a line or two he reveals the peculiar qualities of his personages. It is not the mood but the character that he reproduces; King James on the other hand, although he has an eye for a dramatic setting, as witness the passage mentioned, does not reveal the whole or even the most essential part of his character in the situation. He presents us with a mood that might well be common to all men rather than with a unique personality. He adopts in some measure the method of the novelist who gives the reader many moods and leaves him to construct his own character rather than that of the dramatist who presents in a lightning flash all the main features. The King's Quair is deficient in the matter because on the one hand the poet does not make the best use of the dramatic revelation that might have resulted from the situation he created and on the other presents too few moods from which to build up a satisfactory character. The Quair really gives two moods - the despondent and the hopeful. Now that the deficiency has been pointed out it remains to

say that the portrayal of the moods is an achievement which Chaucer cannot claim. The first peculiar quality of the King's Quair is then, its reproduction of moods as against the reproduction of situations.

The second quality to be noted is one that is difficult to assess and more difficult to discuss; it is the atmosphere of the poem. It is common knowledge that the greater part of mediaeval work started off with the dream convention; the poet or the character falls asleep, usually over some treatise on philosophy or long-winded romance and dreams that he wakens on a fresh May morning in a garden with the birds singing. Thereafter the poet frequently considers that he has made his bow to the established convention and weaves into his setting a tale that will carry his reader far from the garden or the May morning. This setting was admirably suited to the Romance de la Rose and its immediate successors for there was nothing in the latter part of these works that required a different atmosphere. The imitators of this type of romance and their name is legion, allowed one good custom to corrupt the world of poesy. The charge can be made against Chaucer as it can against Gower and many another mediaeval poet that the dream became a convention that was frequently at variance with what was original in their work. Professor Saintsbury has pointed out a fact about "The King's Quair" which is as important as it is obvious, that "it has very much of the dreamy elegance of the Rose

itself, in the passages describing how the weary dreamer looks out into the castle garden, and sees the gracious apparition of his love with golden hair." This remark is applicable to more of the poems than is here cited. Perhaps the only passage to which it could not refer is that containing Minerva's disquisition on Predestination. This then is the second quality of the poem; it preserves throughout the dream atmosphere which is found in the true descendants of the Roman. We have already seen that the character of the dreamer is not substantial; it cannot be grasped as an entire thing. The reason that this fault is not more apparent is that this shadowy personality fits admirably into the dream world of the poem. The claim that is made then for the poem is that it has a setting appropriate to the story. The King's Quair possesses an artistic unity and it is a unity such as is wanting in many works of the preceding generation.

A third quality which may be noted as distinctive is one that will be found to recur often in Scottish poetry of this as well as of later periods. It is its treatment of Nature. In discussing this subject one must bear in mind that there was throughout medieval poetry a conventional reproduction of fanciful natural scenery such as never was on sea or land. There was nothing truly national about this nature; it was the heirloom of romance and was handed about through all Europe until it became tawdry. To describe the object faithfully

was apparently the last aim of the majority of the writers. In "The King's Quair" Nature is described for its own sake, not perhaps for the first time but to a degree that was certainly very uncommon.

Consider the following stanzas:

> "And by this Ilke" ryuer-syde alawe
> Ane hye way thar fand I like to bene,
> On quhich, on every syde, a longe rawe
> Off treis saw I, full of leuis grene,
> That full of fruyte delitable were to sene
> And also, as it come unto my mind,
> Off bestis sawe I mony diuerse kynd:
>
> ---
>
> The lyoun king, and his fere lyonesse;
> The Pantere, like unto the smaragdyne;
> The lytill squerell, full of besynesse,
> The slawe ase, the druggare beste of pyne;
> The nyce ape; the werely porpapyne;
> The percyng lynx; the lufare unicorne,
> That voidis venym with his e[illegible]ore horne."

This passage is quoted not for the sake of giving the impression that James was a great nature poet but to show how closely he could follow the convention and to throw into relief the next quotation. In these two stanzas hints are obviously taken from medieval bestiaries while in an earlier stanza describing the 'lusty plane' the poet borrows from the "Assembly of Foules." It may be that the method used in the quotation was inspired or at least confirmed by Chaucer's list of trees imitated by Spenser, in which each one is named and given what is supposed to be an appropriate epithet. The description of the animals is conventional and it is obvious that the royal poet was not aiming at verisimilitude. This is not

Nature for its own sake but for the sake of ornament. These creatures are gargoyles for the embellishment of the poetical edifice. The difference in treatment when James wrote with his eye on the subject is apparent in the famous passage from which a single stanza is quoted.

> "So thik the bewis and the leves grene
> Beschadit all the aleyes that there were.
> And myddis every herbere myght be sene
> The scharpe grene suete Jenepere,
> Growing so faire with branchis here and there,
> That, as it semyt to a lyf without,
> The bewis spred the herbere all about."

Here is description which succeeds in calling up a picture, and a pleasant one. Most of the followers of the Romance poetry would have said as James does in the following lines:

> "Now was there maid fast by the touris wall
> A gardyn faire, and in the corners set
> Ane herbere grene"

And then would have added a list of flowers resembling an unimaginative seedsman's catalogue. It is easy to imagine such a description eked out with trees for general effect and a casual reference to the birds. From the last line of the stanza quoted it is apparent that the royal poet allowed his fancy to play in the garden. The image of trees spreading the greenness abroad is a pleasant phantasy and one which bespeaks a delight in gardens. Another example of nature description of a different type occurs just before the menagerie roll-call quoted earlier. The poet is engaged depicting a river with its 'cristall water'

"That full of lytill fischis by the brym,
Now here, now there, with bakkis blewe as lede,
Lap and playit, and in a rout can swym
So prattily, and dressit tham to sprede
Thaire curall fynis, as the ruby rede,
That in the sonne on thair scalis bryght
As gesserant ay glitterit in my sight"

This passage gives an example of a peculiar quality of all Scottish nature poetry, its love of colour. The poet is making a picture and he indulges his love of brightness to produce not what the art critic calls a '~~not~~ riot of colour' but an instance of the picturesque on the brighter side. Taking the poem as a whole it may truly be said that thyough its nature description has something of the realism and something of the colour found in later Scottish work, the actual landscapes belong to the South rather than to the North. As Professor Veitch says in "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry" (Vol.I. p.188) the poem exhibits "the influence of genius educated in England, and knowing, in a limited way certainly, from his eleventh year the aspects of English scenery and the modes of English life." It is idle to search in "The King's Quair" for descriptions of Scottish scenery such as are found in Henryson's work but it is possible to observe tendencies towards later Scottish practices.

Another quality of the poem is its subjectivity. The greater part of medieval poetry is objective and dramatic rather than subjective and lyrical. One of the most

delightful features of "The King's Quair" is its mild and pleasant self-revealing. It can never be said, "With this key Chaucer unlocked his heart" but it can be said with some truth "With this key King James unlocked his heart." The royal poet takes the reader into his confidence and charms him with a simple grace. It is true that the king does not reveal his whole character and that he frequently pays the penalty of dullness by returning to old objective things. The finest passages in the poem are those wherein the mood of the moment is best portrayed, when the poet presents his inner thoughts and emotions. It is in these that the spirit of the disciple is least under the domination of his master.

(F. J. Snell in "The Age of Transition" (p.66.)

makes a formidable indictment of the 'Scottish Chaucerians' for their readiness to use 'aureate terms.' "Deadence is nigh at hand, or rather present when the pomp and pageantry of verses are supported by the regular use of epithets like 'crystalline', 'golden', 'purple' &c., when showers are always 'silver', drops are always 'pearly', and the 'crystal' air is as inevitable as the 'sapphire' firmament; when also, none will suffice as leading characters but the gods and goddesses of Olympus, and dignity is sought by citations from classic authors such as Cicero and Virgil. Chaucer it must be confessed is not altogether exempt from these weaknesses, but he is moderation itself compared with his exuberant followers."

Mainly on the account of English influence in his youth the royal poet can be included only with difficulty in the literary movement which took place at the time of national growth. His achievement does not give positive evidence of national development, unless "Christ's Kirk on the Green" and "Peblis at the Play" are rightly attributed to him, but it does show that even when Chaucer is taken wholeheartedly as example, the work is not mere slavish copying but contains something novel and original. As Prof. W. P. Ker says in his "Form and Style in Poetry" (p.82) "The King's Quair is one of the most beautiful secondary poems; there never was a scholar better justified in his following and close imitation of the master; never were the hindrances of conventional mannerism more successfully overcome." The promise of a literature that will be essentially Scottish and yet make use of the models of the Father of English Poetry is found in "The King's Quair" and perhaps in no feature more than in its treatment of Nature. Little more than the promise is contained but it is symptomatic of the effect that Chaucer was to have on the poetry of the North.

The next of the 'Scottish Chaucerians' is Robert Henryson who occupies a place of honour only a little lower than that which posterity has accorded to his successor Dunbar. The facts of his life are few but they have been eked out by

conjecture which if lacking conviction wants nothing in ingenuity. The latest edition of his work made by Professor G. Gregory Smith for the Scottish Text Society in 1914 has shown a wise caution in the poet's biography. After a close scrutiny of the claims to the discovery of facts concerning Henryson made by various critics the editor comes to the following conclusion:- "These then are the only facts of Henryson's personal history: first, that he flourished in the latter half of the fifteenth century; secondly, that he was a resident, and probably a native of Dunfermline; and, thirdly, that he was a master of the Grammar School controlled by the Benedictine Abbey of that royal burgh." This information is certainly meagre but it is all that is justified by the scanty records which consist of the references in "The Lament of the Makaris" and "The Testament and Complaynt of the Papyngo", the designation in the first extant text of the Fables, and the complaint to the Privy Council in 1573 by John Henryson of the Dunfermline Grammar School.

The present purpose will be served not by a general estimate of the poet's work but by an examination of his debt to Chaucer and some study of the Scottish elements in his poetry. The literary historians have generally done less than justice to Henryson. They have usually been content to mention him as an enthusiastic disciple of Chaucer who happened to be more successful than Occleve or Lydgate, as one of the

leaders of a sporadic uprising of poetry which gave to Scotland in the fifteenth century an inexplicable supremacy in literature over England. The student who comes to study Henryson, especially if he is equipped with some knowledge of the vocabulary and constructions of Middle Scots, will probably agree with Professor Gregory Smith that he has not deserved the fate of being "a forgotten poet." The general estimate of his learned editor is not by any means too generous when he says (Introduction p.18), "It is indeed something to find in a secluded Northern poet of that age of poor copyists these qualities of sympathy, vivacity, and taste, singly and united so suggestive of Chaucer himself, and to be able to say that, notwithstanding all Henryson's indebtedness to that master and to others, he holds by virtue of these qualities, high place as an original poet."

In order to make some estimate of Henryson's Chauceranism it will be necessary to see on what grounds he has been claimed as a disciple at all. In the first place it should be noted that he seldom departs from the verse forms used by Chaucer, and when he does it is to use well-known metrical varieties. Most of his work is done in Rhyme Royal. This in itself serves as an indication of discipleship but affords scanty material from which to build a theory of great dependance. After noting other evidence, opportunity will be taken of showing what use he made of the Chaucerian borrowing.

The second argument for discipleship is based on parallelisms of line and phrase. These do not occur with anything like the same frequency as in "The King's Quair" but they appear often enough to prove familiarity with the great part of Chaucer's work. Many examples have been collected in the notes in the edition of the Scottish Text Society. The third evidence of discipleship is to be found in his adaptation of Chaucerian material which is only sometimes openly acknowledged by the poet. It is possible that Henryson found some matter for one or two of his fables in Chaucer but the common stock is so large and is so frequently drawn upon without confession that certainty about borrowing in the Fables is impossible. This is not the case in the "Testament of Cresseid" where the poet recognises his master formally. He declares the source of his inspiration to have been a book

> "Written be worthie Chaucer glorious,
> Of fair Cresseid and lustie Troylus."

In the light of the foregoing facts it is impossible to deny that Henryson was a disciple of Chaucer; it remains to be seen to what extent he accepted the master's work as model. Consider first of all his debt in metrical forms. While it is great it does not take the form of mere imitation. Observe the verdict of Professor Saintsbury in his "History of English Prosody" (p.272) discussing especially Henryson's use of Rhyme Royal in the Testament of Cresseid. Not Chaucer himself, not Sackville, has brought out the echoing clangour and melancholy

majesty of the metre better than is done in the great tragic passages of this piece. And not even Chaucer has done much better, while Sackville has not attempted, its adaptation to the middle style of poetry in the opening of the poem, as well as in the Fables." Henryson in his borrowings from Chaucer and others always succeeded in adapting this old material and moulding it to his purpose. Even in the use of 'foreign' metrical arrangements he appears the master of his technique and gives to it a variety unrivalled save by Chaucer. Henryson can easily be justified in his use of Chaucerian verse forms but in fairness to his skill something more requires to be added. W. E. Henley's estimate in Ward's "English Poets" is something of a literary curiosity but he makes at least one penetrating judgment in his discussion of the poet's prosodic ability when he remarks that he has "the instinct of the refrain." Several examples could be quoted for Henryson was apparently fond of the device, and his success in its use is in itself a proof of his sense of sound values. The most famous is the sonorous

"Obey and thank thy God of all,"

but several others are noteworthy including the curious

"Ken want of wyse men makis fulis to sit on Binkis"

and the reverberating

"Preserve us from this perellus pestilens."

Mention must be made of his use of alliteration not only in the Romance stanza of "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" where the poet works out his scheme completely but also throughout most of his

work in metrical forms of later origin. Even when he uses Rhyme Royal he 'hunts the letter' assiduously and occasionally produces a whole stanza of alliterating lines. His use of this device which is undoubtedly more frequent than Chaucer's suggests that the tradition of the Metrical Romances which were popular at a later date in Scotland than in England had considerable influence on the structure of his verses. It is to be noted then that his discipleship even in matters of prosody is far from complete. Henryson uses the forms of the master but he certainly does not regard them as perfect models; he is master of the technique of several Chaucerian stanzas and he is prepared to adapt them. It is significant that in one of the principal variations from the English poet, a widespread use of alliteration, he is really employing a device which while passing out of use in the South was still popular in the North.

Some consideration should also be given to the question of parallelisms in order to discover Henryson's treatment of these borrowings. Most of these appear on examination to be reminiscences rather than transferences from one manuscript to the other. Even in the Moral Fables where Henryson professed to follow a Latin original and where he undoubtedly laid many writers under tribute his learned editor who made the study for the Scottish Text Society had difficulty in tracing a few sources. In discussing Henryson's general treatment of origins he says, "He owed[50] much to himself that it is supererogation to

trouble about his little debts to predecessors. He picks his material so freely, readjusts an episode or saying in one fable to the telling of another, and creates a fresh mosaic out of the old tesserae with a cunning which disconcerts the antiquary in origins." Much the same might be said of his adaptation of Chaucerian line and phrase. He introduces these memories not with the relish of quoting some excellent thing but with the pleasure of expressing fittingly and well the thought appropriate to the moment. In these parallelisms Henryson makes no profession of a Chaucerian cult; he is apparently willing to make the master his servant.

Henryson's treatment of sources as revealed in parallelisms can also be seen in his adaptation of narrative material. The "Testament of Cresseid" is professedly a continuation of "Troilus and Criseyde". It would be only reasonable to expect that the Scottish poet who is alleged to be a thorough disciple would continue the story with the same purpose in view as his master and with the closest attention to his technique. Yet this is obviously not the case. He raises the poem to a different plane of morality by bringing down the punishment of the gods on the head of the fickle Cressida and introduces an abhorrent spectacle such as Chaucer neither would or could have created. Henryson apparently was not prepared to forsake his own attitude to life or change his technique for the sake of keeping in tone his sequel to one of the greatestof

Chaucer's works.

From these considerations it will appear that the Scottish poet is not to be curtly dismissed as a Chaucerian. It is admitted readily that he owed much to the English poet but his debt has been exaggerated beyond all justice. Henryson was much more than the imitator of a master or the devotee of a poetical tradition. His work cannot properly be evaluated merely by considering his place in the line of English literary development; appeal must also be made to conditions in his own country if he is to be fully understood. It is therefore necessary to enquire concerning the native elements in his work and to place him in the Scottish literary movement which was inspired by the developing nationalism of that country.

Henryson makes frequent references to customs and practices belonging to Scotland. From the modern view-point this simple fact appears to be of little value as evidence of a deep-seated interest in Scottish affairs or as a sign of any important departure in literary habits. Its importance can only be gauged when it is remembered that mediaeval poetry dealt with the elements of experience common to Europe and made little use of the peculiar customs and idiosyncracies of the poet's native land. Thus the cycles of Romance found almost throughout the continent were seldom adapted to the local scene. It has already been observed that several of

those written in Britain afford no clue to decide their place of origin as North or South of the Tweed. Henryson is one of the earliest of the Scottish poets to deal with the life of his own country. The state of justice gives him grave concern in "The Want of Wyse Men" and he makes a slightly veiled reference to the subject again in his fable of "The Sheep and the Dog" which in the opinion of Lord Hailes gives a fair picture of contemporary procedure in the ecclesiastical court. According to the poet the "crownar" alters the names in indictments thus making two charges out of one.

"And so a bud at baith the pairteis skat"

The judge is also attacked:

"But dreid, for meid, he thoillis the rycht go down"

These complaints against injustice are not to be regarded as the mere lamentations of the pessimistic moralist. They had exercised the minds of the Scottish legislators in 1436 to such an extent that an Act was passed requiring assessors to swear "that they nouther have tane nor sall tak meid na buddis of ony partie." Henryson's description of "yone hospitall at the tounis end" in Tthe Testament of Cresseid" accords well as Laing pointed out in his edition of Henryson (p.262) with the requirements of the old Burrow Lawis of Scotland in which it is enjoined that the lepers "sall sit at the posts of the Burgh, and seik almes fra thame that passes in and forth." The "Tale of the Uplandis Mouse and the Borowstoun Mouse" contains many references to Scottish customs; the following stanza undoubtedly deals with contemporary matters:-

"This rurall mouss into the wynter tyde
Had hunger, cauld, and tholit gret distress.
The tothir mouss into the burgh couth byde,
Gild brother was and maid ane fre burgess;
Tol fre also, but custome mar or less,
And fredome had to gang quhar-evir scho list,
Amang the cheiss and meile in ark and kist."

Many other examples could be quoted but these few which may be taken as typical references to Scottish life will suffice.

Henryson's treatment of Nature also affords evidence of his interest in the local. The conventionality of nature description found frequently in Pre-Renaissance poetry had its effect on the first of the Scottish Chaucerians but he succeeded, as was previously observed, in breaking away occasionally from the manner which was then traditional. In the early Nature description prior to King James, the poet generally aimed at presenting a romantic Never-never land in which he jumbled the flora and fauna of a hemisphere. The poet of the King's Quair had sometimes his eye on the subject and wrote with feeling and understanding concerning the world about him. But the world of the Quair whether remembered or actually present to his senses was not characteristically Scottish; naturally enough it was ~~in large part~~ English. With Henryson natural description in Scottish poetry comes to be for the first time national. Professor Veitch sums the case up well in "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry" when he says (p.219) "In point of truth and novelty, vivid picturing, completeness and unity of expression, Henryson is the first Scottish poet who has given us the familiar

landscape of his own country, revealed to us, almost without foreign taint, the richness and beauty of the nature at our doors." If quarrel is to be made with this statement it is with the phrase 'richness and beauty'. Henryson certainly can depict the milder seasons but he is at his best, like most Northern poets, in describing the rigours of Winter. Consider the following stanza from "The Swallow and Other Birds."

> "The wintare cam, the wickit wind can blaw,
> The woddis grene war wallowit with weit,
> Bayth firth and fell with frostis war maid faw,
> Slonkis and slak maid slidderie with the sleit;
> The fowlis fair for falt thai fell off feit;
> On bewis bair it was na bute to byde
> Bot hyit on in housis thame to hyde."

Henryson gives a just impression also in the fable of "The Sheep and the Dog" and also in his introduction to "The Testament of Cresseid" where he tells how -

> "The frost freisit, the blastis bitterly
> Fra Pole Artick come quhisling loud and schill,
> And causit me remufe aganis my will."

Attention should also be paid to the description of the journey of the mice from the country to the town which finds a place in several anthologies. These scenes of which further examples can easily be found in the poems are characteristically Scottish. Once again it falls to be recorded that Henryson in his treatment of nature affords proof of that turning of attention to Scotland found in the work of the Scottish Chaucerians. It is significant that his nature description is of the type adopted by his successors in all ages. This early work of his, far from being foreign or imitative,

belongs to the very soul of Scottish poetry.

One of the most important qualities of Henryson is his realism. It is typical of Scottish Literature that the writer should state the facts of his experience in as vivid a manner as possible and in this, Henryson is no exception. Realism for this Scottish makar means the accurate reproduction of the sensations and emotions aroused by experience. He observes carefully and then relates with the utmost fidelity. This accounts for his native description and it also accounts for the repulsiveness of the Cresseid portrait, concerning which T.F. Henderson complains in his "Scottish Vernacular Literature." When Henryson wishes to arouse horror he can do so in unrivalled fashion. He makes no attempt to give a complete portrait in "The Bludy Serk" of the giant, but he said at least, all that was necessary in the two lines:-

> "Hiss nailis wes lyk ane hellis cruk,
> Thairwith fyve quarters long."

One of the most notable examples is the description of Saturn in the "The Testament of Cresseid."

> "His face fronsit, his lyre was lyke the leid,
> His teeth chattert and chevert with the chin;
> His ene drowpit, how sonkin in his heid;
> Out of his nois the meldrop fast can rin;
> With lippis bla, and cheikis leine and thin;
> The ice-schoklis, that fra his hair doun hang,
> Was wonder greit, and as ane speir als lang."

The most famous example is, however, the condemnation of Cresseid by Saturn and Cynthia; the following stanza describes the curse of the goddess:-

"Thy cristall/ene ~~might~~ mingit with blude I make;
Thy voice sa cleir, unpleasand, hoir, and hace;
Thy lustie lyre ouirspred with spottis blak,
And lumpis haw appeirand in thy face;
Quhair thow cummis, ilk man sall fle the place;
Thus sall thou go begging fra hous to hous,
With cop and clapper lyke ane lazarous."

It is beside the point at the moment to enquire if zeal for morality blinded the aesthetic judgment of the poet in the framing of such a doom, or to protest against the loathsomness of the ghastly image delineated. It is pertinent to observe however, that this ability in describing the abhorrent belongs to the genius of Scottish Poetry in proof of which both Dunbar and Burns could be cited. Scott himself is expert in the gruesome and it is just possible that Byron's excellence in depicting the horrible belongs to the Northern elements in that strange mind. Whether or not this quality should be given the dubious name of realism is a matter for debate but it is important to realise that it is peculiarly of Northern growth. To account for it by appealing to Chaucerian models would be putting a remote possibility in room of an obvious reason.

Henryson's humour is also essentially Scottish. In "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" it verges on the humour of the extravaganza which was inherited by the later Scottish poets including the two greatest. His moral steadiness prevented him from frequent or thorough indulgence in this particular form but it did not banish lighter though more respectable kinds of merriment. Henryson's humour can be gauged indirectly from my

his artistic avoidance of extremes, from his dignity happily wanting in austerity. It can be measured in the success with which he renders the words of the Olympians. There is an elevation in the language and an appropriateness in the ideas which prevent the poet from the danger that has threatened all who would parle with the immortal gods of making the easy passage from the sublime to the ridiculous. The tones of Saturn are sonorous, yet the poet gives no impression of employing an artificial poetic diction. It was probably also his humour and that sense of proportion which is basic to it that prevented him from mingling moral discourse with his narrative. He cannot escape the charge of being occasionally tedious in his didacticism and of playing the schoolmaster to his readers. But consider such a poem as "The Abbey Walk" There is no test of the poetical ability of the moralist poet stronger than this; watch him at work on an idea that is capable of expansion in terms of morality and see if he produces from it a work of art. The Scottish poet can certainly endure this test, for in the poem mentioned, which is undoubtedly capable of prosy meanderings in morality, he has restricted himself to the expression of the mood of pensiveness. Perhaps a short digression might be allowed at this point to observe the value of Henryson's restrained moral in "The Testament of Cresseid." The poet there dispenses an even-handed justice faithful to the realism of the North. The poem is satisfactory morally and aesthetically, because it

has been rounded off and placed in a system that is comprehensible. Henryson's moral sense supplies the completeness which is lacking in Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde." It is not claimed that this humour of Henryson's is distinctively Scottish; it is maintained, however, that in his experiment in the fabliau form he was using a national type.

Further evidence of a humour which is distinctiyely Scottish can be seen in innumerable happy touches especially in the Fables. Almost everyone affords examples, but a quotation from "The Uplandis Mouse and the Borowstone Mouse" will suffice. The two sisters quarrel over the fare provided by the country mouse and the urban lady puts on her best town airs in the middle of the controversy.

> "My faire sister", quod scho, "hald me excusit,
> This rude diet and I can nocht accord;
> Till tender meit my stomok ay is usit,
> For quhy I fair als wele as ony lord;
> Thir rude nuttis and pese, or they be bord;
> Will brek my teith, and make my wame full sklender,
> Quhilk usit wer befor to meitis tender."

This delightfully naive humour plays an important part in a poem which Dr. Metcalfe in his edition calls "probably one of the most perfect pieces of literary workmanship Scotland has produced". Henryson's humour reaches its best however in "Robene and Makyne" an inverted "Duncan Gray" but lacking the happy ending of Burns's song. The poem has no taint of coarseness but tells the tale with deftly humorous touches.

Robene and Makyne are not the conventional shepherd and shepherdess of Arcadia, nor the clumsy boors of the town novelist. Henryson pays them the attention due to human beings and gives no feeling of condescending so to do. In its sympathy and humour the poem belongs to a genre of which the most notable example is probably "Tam Glen." Its subject can best be expressed in Makyne's own words,

> "The man that will nocht quhen he may
> Sall haif nocht quhen he wald."

T.F.Henderson says "Robene and Makyne", while it is the most characteristically Scottish, is also the gem of Henryson's productions." Later in his"Scottish Vernacular Literature" he adds the true judgment that in the poem "Henryson writes as if Chaucer had never written."

In Henryson, whom Professor Gregory Smith describes as"the greatest of the Makars" (Scottish Literature p.15) it is easy to see the qualities of the later Scottish Poets. Attention to detail, delight in landscape, humour of the bantering type as well as a hint of the "topsy turvy", ability to describe the gruesome-these are found in his work and are characteristic of Scottish Poetry. His chief limitation is his lack of satirical power possessed by Dunbar, Lyndsay and Burns and by Byron who has many features in common with the Northern poets. The fact that these qualities are found in Henryson is indicative of a creative power not drawn from an alien source. It is time that he was influenced by

Chaucer especially in matters prosodic but his imitation of the English Poet was not concerned with mood, or attitude to life or any other element in the compounding of his poetic spirit. Whatever material he obtained from Chaucer he shaped and adapted in accordance with his principles of poetry and life with the result that he evolved work remote from the Chaucerian. What useful purpose is served by regarding the "Testament of Cresseid" as an evidence of discipleship? It is true that the same stanza form is used and that the story professes to be a continuation of"Troilus and Criseyde", But it is different from the Southern poem in moral tone, in characterisation, in manner. Some day a critic enthusiastic for literary imitation may discover the work of that English Senecan responsible for the early Hamlet; no doubt he will cheerfully dub Shakespeare a disciple of his protege! Henryson is easily placed in the scheme of literary development suggested in these pages. His work shows the same characteristics but in refined form as those found in contemporary narrative poetry of a more popular type. At the stage of national development which Scotland had reached by the middle of the fifteenth century, it was natural that there should be a turning towards subjects intimately associated with the life of the country. The poet reveals an interest in the landscape, in the events of the day, in the humour and idiosyncracies of the people, in their habits. The commonplaces of mediaevalism generalised to the extinction of human interest give place to

intimate studies of life and conduct in the Scotland of his own day. It is true of course that Henryson looks backwards sometimes. In his didacticism and in his lamentations over an unjust world he belongs to the past but he breaks with tradition in revealing the possession of national traits and an interest in them. This 'Chaucerian' is undoubtedly 'Scottish.'

Different estimates have been made of the genius of Dunbar, varying from the paneygyric of Scott to the extravagant condemnation of Lowell. Comparison with Henryson has been frequent, to the disadvantage of now one, now the other while Burns and the early 'makar' have also been measured against each other with similar result. The difference of opinion regarding the relative powers of Henryson and Dunbar is due usually not to any actual disagreement concerning specific qualities or instances of their poetry under review but to a failure to compare comparable matters. To speak of the whole work of one as being better than that of another is to make a judgment as unfair as it is useless. A more critical attitude produces more valuable results by setting up definite terms of reference in instituting an enquiry into their relative merits. When this is done, the doctors seldom differ. Such a verdict as that given by Professor Saintsbury in his "History of English Literature" would probably meet with general approval. (p.185-186).

"It is unusual to rank William Dunbar as the chief of all this group, and in fact the greatest Scottish poet except

Burns. Nor is there much reason for quarrelling with the estimate, since Dunbar, though he has perhaps nothing equal in their own kinds to the above noted passages of the "Testament of Cresseide" and to "Robene and Makyne," has a larger collection to show, both of good and of excellent work, a somewhat wider range, and above all, a certain body and fullness of poetical wine which is not so evident in the pensive though not cheerful schoolmaster of Dunfermline."

There are moods of quiet devotion and of delicate humour in Henryson which are not to be found in the later poet in spite of his great variety; on the other hand Henryson's work is restricted in tone and somewhat lacking in vigour when compared with Dunbar's. Again, Dunbar may be the poet of a national occasion, but he lacks the sympathetic understanding of the ordinary people in country and town possessed by Henryson. It would be easy to add to these comparisons but at the end their summation would provide no simple answer to the question "Which was the greater poet?" The two men differed in outlook, in experience, and in the nature and amount of their poetic production; an attempt at generalised comparison would therefore be futile.

It is not necessary to consider the details of Dunbar's life few as they are. It is usually assumed that he was born circa 1460 and "it is probable that he did not live long after 1520" (A.J.G.Mackay in Introduction to Scottish Text Society edition). The important fact of his life was his intimate association with the Court of James IV. Assuming the habit of a Franciscan he wandered through England to France, but he forsook the regular for the secular clergy and spent much of his poetic power in unavailing prayers to James for a benefice. Until the disaster of Flodden, if not till a later date, he was the recipient of some courtly favours, some of which may have been obtained through/

through the good offices of Margaret Tudor.

As with Henryson so with Dunbar it is not necessary to discuss all the aspects of his poetic achievement although this is a task that has not yet been done by literary critics. In his work it is possible to trace a great number of influences literary and social for he was genius enough to borrow successfully from many sources. The present purpose will be served by limiting the scope of criticism to a short examination of his place in the line of development. Dunbar played an important part in the decline of the romance in fifteenth century Scotland. As a member of the Court of James IV, a king who found a delight in the chivalry of the irretrievable times, he might readily have attempted a revival of the chanson de geste. Judging from his frequent petitions and dedications, the poet was evidently anxious to please his royal patron; if then his work found both inspiration and model in Chaucer it is strange in the circumstances that he attempted nothing in the manner of "The Knight's Tale." It is still stranger that more than any poet of the period he poured ridicule on the tournament and the knightly usages of combat without the least restraint. His method was not that of "Sir Thopas." If a model requires to be found it is only necessary to point to the early part of "Ralph Collier." Dunbar simply parodies the metrical romances by introducing low characters in place of knights and low comedy in place of chivalric combat.

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He finds only amusement in challenges and joustings surrounded by elaborate conventions and refuses to take seriously the dignity of the lists. Towards the chivalric code he shows the disrespect of the iconoclastic gamin! Perhaps the reason is to be found in a stanza from "The Goldyn Targe."

> "In twynkling of ane eye to schip thai went,
> And swyth up saile unto the top thai stent,
> And with swift course atour the flude thay frak;
> Thay fyrit gunnis wyth powder violent,
> Till that the reke raise to the firmament,
> The rochis all resowynt with the rak,
> For reird it semyt that the raynbow brak;
> With spirit affrayde upon my fete I sprent
> Amang the clewis, so carefull was the crak."

Dunbar's attitude to the romance is readily understood when we remember that the "crak" was the signal for the departure not only of the "hundreth ladyes" of his dream, but also of the panoplied knights of chivalry. The older metrical romances were imitated and copied after Dunbar's time, but no longer could they be continued as "suthfast" renderings of contemporary happenings or as stories which fitted the social life and military customs of the age. The introduction of characters drawn from the common people and of incidents alien to the chivalric code led quickly to violent parody as in "The Turnament." Making allowances for the different temperaments of the poets and for differences in intention this poem belongs to the same movement as that which produced the "Wallace," but Dunbar's work occurs at the more advanced stage when the romance tradition was practically at an end.

Having/

Having outlined his position briefly in regard to the changing attitude towards chivalry it will be well to consider the influence of Chaucer on the poet and then to observe his native traits. Like his predecessors, Dunbar makes formal acknowledgment of debt to the Soutern poets including Chaucer. His reference to discipleship in stanzas from "The Goldyn Targe" is made explicitly in the praise of his masters and implicitly in the imitation of some unfortunate features of their style. The following quotation then provides overt acknowledgement and at the same time suggests some ill effects of the discipleship which will require to be discussed.

> "O reuerend Chaucere, rose of rethoris all,
> As in oure tong ane flour imperiall,
> That raise in Britane ewir, quho redis rycht,
> Thou beris of makaris the tryumph riall;
> Thy fresch anamalit termes celicall
> This mater coud illumynit haue full brycht:
> Was thou noucht of oure Inglisch all the lycht,
> Surmounting ewiry tong terrestriall,
> Alls fer as Mayes morow dois mydnycht?
>
> O morall Gower, and Ludgate laureate,
> Your sugurit lippis and tongis aureate,
> Beme to oure eris cause of grete delyte;
> Your angel mouthis most mellifluate
> Our rude langage has clere illumynate,
> And faire our-gilt oure speche, that imperfyte
> Stude, or your goldyn pennis schupe to wryte;
> This Ile before was bare, and desolate
> Off rethorike, or lusty fresch endyte."

It is advisable not to take these laudatory addresses too seriously. This one indeed smacks of the poetical exercise in conventional form found in the fifteenth century poets of the South. The two stanzas/

stanzas however substantiate the claim that Dunbar was a Chaucerian even if they may give a wrong impression of his imitativeness. An estimate of his discipleship can be made only by attending to the whole volume of Dunbar's poetry. The student of Chaucer approaching the poetry of the Scottish makar would find therein much that is widely different from the work of the English poet and would probably come to the conclusion that though there are points of similarity in form and even a certain kinship in spirit the two poets are to be contrasted rather than compared. Once again a formal debt has to be acknowledged but beyond that the obligation is scanty. Before considering the differences in genius it will be well to examine the extent of Dunbar's borrowings from Chaucer and the use he made of them. He uses Chaucerian metrical forms, but he is not confined to these alone. His metrical range included French forms probably borrowed directly. Dunbar was undoubtedly interested in verse-making as a technique, - witness "The Flyting" and "Ane Ballat of Our Lady;" - it is therefore not surprising that he was influenced by the forms employed by the English poets including Chaucer. He did not however follow the example of only a single master nor did he fail to modify what he did borrow.*

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* Detailed consideration of Dunbar's versification will be found in G. P. McNeil's Appendix to Volume I of the Scottish Text Society edition. See also "Altenglische Metrik von Dr J. Schipper."

In his introduction to the Scottish Text Society edition of Dunbar, A. J. G. Mackay makes the following criticism. "Dunbar, while he gratefully acknowledges the father of English poetry as his master, takes from him chiefly his language, which often finds parallels; but as regards the substance of his poems, only the tale of "The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo" and the verses on his Empty Purse, show traces of imitation." In support of this statement it may be pointed out that the stanza in praise of Chaucer already quoted from "The Goldyn Targe" is concerned with his expression, his "fresch anamlit termes celicall", rather than with the content of his poetry. It would be fairer to attribute the imitated part of Dunbar's diction to Chaucer's successor rather than to Chaucer himself. As F. J. Snell pointed out in a passage quoted earlier, Chaucer was not altogether exempt from the use of aureate terms but in this respect he was "moderation itself compared with his exuberant followers." It is true that Dunbar can weave this cloth of gold but his production if rich and full of colour is apt to be stiff. It may be a noble poetic purpose to "load every rift with gold;" it is an unworthy aim to adorn silk with copious tinsel. If the fame of the Scottish makar had depended on his most Chaucerian work the historian of fifteenth century literature would have disposed of him in a sentence. "Lydgate... Occleve... Hawes..... There was also a Scottish poet called William Dunbar who wrote poetical exercises in much the same/

v. p. 225

same manner." In answering a charge made by Gosse against the artificiality of the Scottish Poet T. F. Henderson made a most important point in criticism.* He observed that Dunbar "has two styles - the artificially ornate and the rich and racy vernacular Scots." The truth of this statement can be seen by reading "The Golden Targe" and "The Flyting." Dunbar is undoubtedly expert at coining these aureate terms but the technique is not original nor does it allow his genius room to expand. Take for example the opening stanza of "The Goldyn Targe."

"Ryght as the stern of day begouth to schyne,
Quhen gone to bed war Vesper and Lucyne,
I raise, and by a rosere did me rest;
Wp sprang the goldyn candill matutyne,
With clere depurit bemes cristallyne,
Glading the mery foulis in thair nest;
Or Phebus was in purpur cape revest
Wp raise the lark, the hevyns menstrale fyne
In May, in till a morrow myrthfullest."

This is undoubtedly well done, but is it really worth while doing? It is true that the poet occasionally hits on a phrase which has all the appearance of artless spontaneity such as the one noted by almost every critic "The Skyis rang for schouting of the larkis" but these do not justify the many lines in which he fails to conceal his striving after effect. Dunbar the/

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* See "Scottish Vernacular Literature," p.185.

the Chaucerian barely escapes from dullness.*

In assessing the influence of the Father of English poetry on James I and Robert Henryson it was necessary to take account of reminiscences and direct borrowings from the master. It was observed that these two Scottish poets had undoubtedly made use of material found in Chaucer even although they modified it in a manner not compatible with the closest discipleship. This was noted as being particularly true in the work of Henryson. The amount of direct influence as measured by the presence of Chaucerian material is even smaller in Dunbar's work than in that of the earlier poets. The explanation of the absence of widespread borrowing lies in the fact that the two men were different in temperament and outlook. The simile of rapier and bludgeon applied so frequently to the satire of Pope and Dryden is much more appropriate to that of Chaucer and Dunbar. Chaucer's rogues have at least one pleasant feature - even if it be only a gleaming pate; Dunbar's belong to the hell in which he delights to place them. On occasion his humour is expressed in the friendly smile of the foible-observer; more frequently in the sardonic laughter of the disillusioned at the knavery of humanity. While Chaucer challenges Dunbar in coarseness and shows the same willingness for "stooping to play with evil," the English poet has a simple pathos and an appreciation of innocence and sweetness unknown/

* T. F. Henderson's "Scottish Vernacular Literature," p.166. "It is only when he departs from the allegorical and mannered method of his predecessors, and trusts to his own artistic instincts - to his personal observations of nature and man, and to the racy vernacular of which he had such limitless command that he does suitable justice to his gifts."

unknown to the Northern makar. Difference in temperament was seconded by difference in poetic aim in reducing borrowing to slight proportions. Dunbar was interested in the present and scarcely at all in the past. While it is true that he found the subject of his verse in humanity it is no less true that it was humanity as represented by Scotsmen at the close of the fifteenth century. Chaucer was to some extent concerned with the past and to that degree differed from Dunbar, but in addition he was interested in fourteenth century English people, in their foibles, frailties, customs, ways of thinking, and while through them he attained universal truth to humanity his selection of his particular medium decreased the possibility of direct borrowing by his Northern successors at least. Dunbar comes nearest to the Chaucerian tradition in his allegorical poetry. It has already been observed that in his choice of language he achieved a thorough if none too valuable discipleship. In his attitude towards the didacticism of the allegory however he showed faint signs of joining Chaucer's English followers. An interesting passage from Professor Gregory Smith's "The Transition Period" (pp.45-46) puts this point clearly. "Not only is the lesson kept apart from the allegory, but the allegory itself, which might have become a mere pastiche, is treated anew. This aptitude for the pictorial, which characterises the early Renaissance, begins to appear in Henryson. In a skilful way he makes use of the outworn machinery of the allegory; he treats it as a matter of/

of technique and discovers in it those possibilities of vivid effect which find their fullest expression in the processional panels of the Elizabethans." The criticism applies to Dunbar who, while much less interested in the "moral" than Henryson, gained at least equally vivid effect in his allegory. It is only necessary to recall the description of "Yre" or of "Sweirness" from "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis" to be convinced of the appropriateness of the criticism when applied to Dunbar. Taking all the evidence into account it does not seem a fair judgment to describe the work of this Scottish poet as mainly inspired by Chaucer. It is not suggested in these pages that the Southern master exerted no influence on Dunbar; the position is rather that the appeal to Chaucerian discipleship which has frequently been made is insufficient to account for the kind of poetry in which his genius found expression. Some other influences must have acted on Dunbar and one of these, the developing nationalism of his country, is hereafter claimed to be at least equal in importance to the acceptance of the Southern poets as tutors.

In discussing the influences due to the developing nationalism in Scotland it is well to realise that during Dunbar's lifetime Scotland was bound together in a common sentiment for the first time in grief for the tragic happening at Flodden. As Hume Brown has pointed out in his "Surveys of Scottish History" it was this national calamity which provided the culmination in the/

the development of national consciousness and that in the religious crisis of succeeding years it was a nation which endured the experience. The process of nation-building was greatly advanced by the fourth James who did much more than retrieve the ground which his royal predecessor had lost. Dunbar appeared at a time when nationality had arisen in all but perfect form and he was favoured by a king who laboured to make it complete. What evidence is to be found in his poetry of an interest in this movement and to what extent was he influenced by the events of his own age?

Dunbar's poetry more than that of any of his predecessors was concerned with the events and the personages of his own day. He is the poet of occasions. He celebrated in "The Thistle and the Rose" what was in many ways the most important event in the reign of James IV. On behalf of the Scottish ambassadors to London in 1501 who arranged the royal marriage he sang the praises of the English capital. In the "Epitaph on Donald Owre" he attacked a troubler of the peace who caused the king and perhaps his successor considerable anxiety. Dunbar does not shrink from dealing with such public affairs and in this instance actually suggests that a sterner policy should have been adopted towards the rebel.* The poet seizes the opportunity of discomfiting a

rival/

* "Off the falis fox dissimulator,
Kynd hes every theiff and tratour;
Efter respyt
To wirk dispyt
Moir appetyt
He hes of natour."

rival for ecclesiastical preferment when Damian "the fenyeit Freir" passed out of royal favour. He aims at greater game in attacking Albany in whom hopes for a peaceful minority after Flodden were centred. While the major part of the poem is concerned with general charges, the opening stanza contains a very definite accusation.

> "We Lordis hes chosin a chiftane mervellus,
> That left hes us in grit perplexite,
> And him absentis, with wylis cautelus
> Yeiris and dayis mo than two or thre,
> And nocht intendis the land nor people se
> Faltis to correct, nor vicis for to chace.
> Our Lord Gouernour, this sedull send we the:
> In lak of justice this realme is schent allace."

Much of his poetry is concerned with happenings and people of less importance nationally; it would be easy to find a score of poems dealing with such specific events and characters in Dunbar's work. In addition to these he writes a considerable number of satires of a more general order. The main portion of the poet's life was passed at the Court with the result that he failed to have the sympathetic understanding of the common people which Henryson possessed. It is true that the Court was not an exclusive society lacking contact with the lower orders but its members naturally had the point of view of a privileged class. If Dunbar's genius had been rich in dramatic quality he might have been able to share imaginatively the experiences of the people and he might have found delight in their portrayal. The

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cast of his mind was satirical; his attitude was always personal. He is the prophet who through pondering reads the signs of the times rather than the dramatist who by swift intuition knows the temper of an age. When he turned to the people it was usually to deride them. Henryson knew the foibles of men and women in his own day, but he saw no occasion for adopting the tone of ridicule. Chaucer had courtly associations, but he had the dramatic gift which enabled him to understand men in all orders of society. The important point to observe however is that Dunbar found his interests in the men and women of his own day whom he knew best and in the events through which they passed. While he lacked sympathy with the people as a whole, he was not out of touch with the national movement. He deplores with evident sincerity not only the political events which threatened turmoil such as the absence of Albany and the rising of Donald of the Isles but also the weaknesses of the social structure, particularly with regard to the administration of justice. It would be absurd to regard him as an early Protestant but he reveals that satirical criticism of clerical immorality which was the precursor of the Reformation throughout Europe. Dunbar himself was probably not free from the vices which he condemned in others; it is not unlikely that the accusations in "The Flyting" were at least founded on fact. In his poetry he shows a lack of moral restraint and in spite of A. J. G. Mackay's plea that he adds a moral/

moral to his freest tales it is impossible to escape the impression that his didactic efforts claimed very little of the zest which he ~~gives~~ gave to his story-telling. Dunbar has moods of genuine religion as in "Rorate Celi Desuper" and in that duet between merle and nightingale with the dulcet refrain "All love is lost but upon God allone." It is possible that in his satires on the clergy he was concerned not only with their secular vices but also with their failure to perform the function of the Church within the nation. This attention to the contemporary can be regarded as evidence of the influence of growing nationalism on the poet.

In the Introduction to the Scottish Text Society edition, A. J. G. Mackay attempts to place Dunbar's poems according to the probable order of their dates. (See Appendix to Volume 1). While the critic is inclined to adopt the principle that poets turn to religious themes in later years (penitence, according to Bernard Shaw, belongs to a man's dotage), he does produce evidence that after Flodden Dunbar was concerned mainly with the serious issues of life. In more than one poem mention is made of the disaster in language which shows that the poet was deeply moved by the tragedy. In one of these particularly, "Ane Orisoun," Dunbar reveals a sense of pity for something more than a personal loss; in the concluding stanza he expresses the emotion of a people whose grief is becoming articulate.

"Lord! hald thy hand, that strikken hes so soir;
Haue of us pietie, eftir our punytioun;
And give us grace the for to greif no more,
And gar us mend with penance and contritioun;
And to thy vengeance mak non additioun,
As thow that of michtis may to morne
Fra cair to confort thow mak restitioun,
For, but thy help, this kynrick is forlorne."

Dunbar has no great lyrical power and in this respect he resembles Henryson. This circumstance probably accounts for the fact that the Scottish Chaucerians failed to produce any patriotic song even although they lived at a time of national development. The effect which that movement had is to be measured rather by their interest in the affairs and people of Scotland and the stanza quoted shows that that interest though lacking the richest lyrical expression was none the less sincere.

Dunbar's treatment of Nature is different from Henryson's. In the earlier poet it is easy to find evidence of an interest in Scottish scenery and a felicity in its description. It is possible to discover only a few scenes drawn at first-hand in the work of Dunbar. It is a significant fact that the best of these, like the best of Henryson's, deal with Winter moods. An example may be taken from "Meditatioun in Wyntir."

"In to thir dirk and drublie dayis,
Quhone sabill all the hewin arrayis,
With mystie vapouris, cluddis and skyis,
Nature all curage me denyis
Off sangis, ballattis, and of playis."

It must be frankly admitted that judged either by the number or the nature of his references Dunbar shows no partiality for/

for Scottish scenery. Professor Veitch in his study of "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry" cites "The Thistle and the Rose" and "The Goldyn Targe" as containing the best examples of Dunbar's nature description. After quoting the first-named poem and praising its colour he adds the following judgment, "The landscape described is still, however, the formal garden, with the touch of the hand of man." His comment on "The Goldyn Targe" is still more to the point. He notices the colour again and then observes, "Yet it is a generalised picture. There are few wholly specific features noted by the poet - in such a way, at least, that we can say distinctively, that it is a May morning in Scotland, even taking our May at its best." The truth is that Dunbar was simply not interested in nature. He was essentially a townsman concerned with humanity especially as seen in the men and women of the Court. Nature is introduced mainly as a background for his allegorical poems. He borrows the convention from the allegorists of the South and while he thought fit to modify it by brightening its colour his lack of interest in the nature world about him prevented the poet from replacing it by the scenery of his own country. His failure to depict the native scene is not to be regarded as evidence of lack of interest in Scotland. He was temperamentally unsuited to nature description. His failure is to be ascribed to the same causes as produced the weakness in this aspect of literature among most of the writers of the early eighteenth century.

Two/

Two other important characteristics of the poet require discussion, his realism and his humour. In the discussion of Henryson it was observed that he shared that realism which is the possession of all Scottish poets. As Professor Gregory Smith says in his "Scottish Literature," (p.5) "Scottish literature has no monopoly of this which is to be found in the best work everywhere, and is indeed a first axiom of artistic method, no matter what processes of selection and recollection may follow; but in Scots the zest for handling a multitude of details rather than for seeking broad effects by suggestion is very persistent." Dunbar reveals this tendency. His realism, using that term in its usual vague form, is of two types. In the first it is a readiness to include matters of all kinds as themes capable of poetic treatment. No fact is too nauseating physically or morally to be forbidden admission to his verses. This "realism" is not by any means restricted to Scottish literature although the Northern writers have more than a fair share of it. The second type, the one referred to in the foregoing quotation is characteristic almost peculiarly of the Scottish poets. "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Sinnis" provides several excellent examples of the power to impress by the presentation of detail. Thus in the portrait of Sweirnes, Dunbar does not make use of general terms to describe the characteristics of this sin. A few striking suggestions suffice.

"Syne Sweirnes, at the second bidding,
Come lyk a sow out of a midding,
Ful slepy was his grunyie."

Like most other Scottish poets he exercised his realism most frequently in depicting the ugly and the loathsome. His was not the temperament to be attracted by the pleasanter aspects of life and character. He has the distinction of possessing among English poets the richest vocabulary of vituperation. His pages yield few examples of pleasant scenes or characters pictured forth in telling phrase and line. When he departs from his realistic methods he becomes the courtly allegorist imitative of convention, content to let the flowers be "quhyt and rede" in the May morning. In discussions of Dunbar's realism mention is frequently made of "The Flyting." It is very questionable if this tour de force is to be regarded as an experiment in realism. Is it not rather a verbal exercise, a competition to out-Herod Herod in his raging? Kennedy may have had his faults, but it is asking too much of human credulity to believe that he earned all these titles of blackguardism and rascality. The aim was obviously not representation of the real but imaginative misrepresentation of the truth. Dunbar's realism is rather to be found in such work as "The Turnament," "The Fenyeit Freir of Tungland," "The Twa Mariit Wemen and the Wedo," "Rycht airlie on Ask Weddinsday," and in the extravaganzas permitted by the easy morality of his age. In the latter poems the most unpalatable facts are presented with a zeal for/

for clearness worthy of finer themes. Dunbar's realism proves his kinship with the makers of the early Northern fabliaus and with the succeeding poets of Scotland. Like them he was concerned with creating a clear impression of the facts of incident or character as they appealed to him by presenting vivid particulars. The result is that he has left a record of contemporary life which however it may be coloured by his personality is well-defined and clear.

No more illuminating comment on the mind and spirit of Scottish poetry has been made than that contained in Professor Gregory Smith's "Scottish Literature" in his discussion of "Two Moods." After showing the peculiar nature and the extent of realism in the literature of the North he makes the following suggestive criticism.(p.19). "The Scottish Muse has, however, another mood. Though she has loved reality, sometimes to maudlin affection for the commonplace, she has loved not less the airier pleasure to be found in the confusion of the senses, in the fun of things thrown topsyturvy, in the horns of elfland and the voices of the mountain." Dunbar was not blessed with the nimbleness of wit necessary for successful dealing in diablerie; elfland was a region from which his masculine and rather coarse genius was forever debarred. But he was a master of extravaganza and a Prince of Topsyturvydom. He shared in that contrariety which distinguishes the Scottish Muse whereby despondence, piety, religious calm and pensiveness are suddenly changed for elation if/

if not for delirious profanity. His poetry is possessed by realism, but his devotion to the facts of the matter may at any time be distracted by the incongruous. "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis" may claim to be one of the finest examples of realism in Northern poetry. Dunbar remains faithful to his subject, depicting every Vice with the closest attention to his subject and then at the end the mood suddenly changes in that inconsequent and breath-taking swoop to the ridiculous.

"Than cryd Mahoun for a Heleand padyane;
Syne ran a feynd to feche Makfadyane,
Ffar northwart in a nuke;
Be he the correnoch had done schout,
Erschemen so gadderit him abowt,
In Hell grit rowme thay tuke.
Thae tarmegantis, with tag and tatter,
Ffull lowd in Ersche begowth to clatter,
And rowp lyk revin and ruke:
The Devill sa devit wes with thair yell,
That in the depest pot of hell
He smorit thame with smuke."

Occasionally he gives himself up entirely to the topsy-turvy mood as in the "Littill Interlud off the Droichis part of the play" where his Fancy borders on Midsummer madness. The "logical" Scot apparently finds delight in taking an inverted view of the world; his sober days are relieved by moments surrendered to the absurd. No claim can be made for such a story as "The Freiris of Berwick" that its humour is peculiarly Scottish. Success in narrative poetry of this order was undoubtedly one of the achievements of Chaucer, but the Southern poets do not possess the/

the gusto and abandon of the Northerners in extravaganza. Dunbar's range of humour was undoubtedly wide and he had a quality of wit which while Chaucerian is seldom found among the Scottish poets of this or any later period. Take for example a stanza in which Dunbar pleads with one whom he mistakes for Saint Francis. The poet hints gently that if his way of salvation lies through service to Mother Church he would make a better disciple as a Bishop than as a Friar!

> "In haly legendis haif I hard allevin,
> Ma sanctis of bischoppis, nor freiris be sic sevin;
> Off full few freiris that hes bene sanctis I reid;
> Quhairfor ga bring to me ane bishopis weid,
> Gife evir thow wald my saule gaid unto Hevin."

Is this not the very tone of Chaucer? If Huberd that "worthy lymytour" of Chaucer's own creation had ever found his office unprofitable he would undoubtedly have pled in similar terms with his ghostly visitant. There is a touch of Chaucerian pleasantry in the sequence of poems on the exercise of Discretion in Asking, Giving, and Taking. The humour which is characteristically Scottish is however that of the topsyturvy type. The passage quoted above is Chaucerian in wit; the conclusion of the poem reveals humour of the true Scottish flavour.

> "This freir that did Sanct Francis thair appeir,
> Ane fiend he wes in liknes of ane freir;
> He vaneist away with stynk and fyrie smowk;
> With him me thocht all the houshend he towk,
> And I awoik as wy that wes in weir."

Many other examples could be given including the most notable one/

one of all, "Kynd Kyttok" but the complete proof of his devotion to the humorously fantastic is to be found only in the volume of his poetry. The main conclusion to be drawn from an examination of Dunbar's humour is that it is distinguished by traits which are national. He has touches similar to Chaucer, but his main successes have been won in the exercising of a form which is distinctively Scottish.

Dunbar differs from James I, Henryson and even from Douglas in that he belongs more than any of these Scottish Chaucerians to the Renaissance. In outlook his sympathies are with the sixteenth rather than with the fourteenth century. This is evident in most of his work, but in no aspect is it more so than in his language and expression. It is true that he makes use of alliteration much more frequently than Chaucer and that he even employs the old alliterative scheme which lingered in the North after it had declined in the South. But even in this return to older practices his newer outlook can be seen. In "The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo" he does not conform to the conventions of alliterative verse but enriches the structure in a fashion which reveals the artist who is prepared to adapt the older manner to his purpose. The distinguishing characteristic of Dunbar as technician is his self-consciousness. The improvement of the older alliterative scheme by the addition of an extra alliterating syllable is in itself an evidence of the realisation that the moulds of verse were individual creations. This/

This self-consciousness is also revealed in his use of "aureate" terms in which he is not excelled save by the early Elizabethans. In Dunbar the old makar gives place to the conscious artist; language is for him an instrument with a music of its own which can only be made audible by conscious purpose and by a seeking after modes of expression rich in colour and in melody. His affinities are with Wyatt and Surrey rather than with Chaucer and Lydgate. It is true that he has practically no interest in the classics and that in his allegories he belongs to the age which was passing, but his interest in the present life, in his attention to art forms, in his conscious moulding of language, he belongs to the sixteenth century. Dunbar thus appears as the great transition poet whose inspiration was derived from his own age although his form and style were schooled by earlier masters. He is in fact a Scot of the early Renaissance who found scope for his genius as well as inspiration in the nation which was then developing, and who owed a debt in matters formal to the poets of the South. If he is to be called a Scottish Chaucerian the emphasis must be placed on the first element in his title.*

It has become a tradition in histories of literature

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* Dr J. M. Ross in his "Early Scottish History and Literature" is of the opinion that Dunbar's nationalism was so strong as to be a restriction on his poetic genius. (See p. 216). "Whatever Dunbar attempted, he did as well as Chaucer, often, indeed, with greater animation and lavish wealth of words, but if he has the national vigour, he has also the national narrowness."

to regard James I, Henryson, Dunbar and Gavin Douglas as the Scottish Chaucerians. Douglas is in many respects different from the others, and in most criticisms concerning these four poets a certain uneasiness is apparent in approaching the last member of the group. Perhaps this is due to unwillingness to acknowledge that Douglas does not possess the poetic genius of the earlier members. More probably it is due to the fact that the same explanation of Chaucerian discipleship is obviously not satisfactory alike for Dunbar and his high-born contemporary. The difference between the two men is not merely in degree of poetic power; they are fundamentally opposed in interest and outlook.

It has too often been assumed that the translator of the Aeneid at the beginning of the sixteenth century was to be written down as a Renaissance poet. A closer examination in more recent years, especially that made by Dr Lauchlan Maclean Watt in 1920, has shown that the translator did not depart from the mediaeval manner to any great extent. The theme and underlying conception belong to the Renaissance but the background of the poem and the treatment of the material show relationships with the preceding age. Once again it must be said that the present purpose will not be served by a general discussion of the work of Douglas. It is however necessary to estimate his Chaucerian discipleship and attempt to find a place for him in the scheme of literary development presented in these pages.

In/

In approaching the poetry of Gavin Douglas it must be remembered that he was an ecclesiastic in training and outlook. More than any of the other members of the group he held the scholastic attitude and consequently more than they he was subject to literary influences from previous generations. It is obvious from his work that he did not possess the originality of great poetic genius which can deal with old materials and produce the distinctively personal. His poetry was therefore more bookish in inspiration than that of the earlier Scottish Chaucerians. One would naturally expect to find in the writings of such a man who has been called a Chaucerian an intimate devotion to the English master revealed in substance and style. An examination of "The Palice of Honour" and "King Hart" reveals the fact that Douglas devoted himself with zeal to the allegorical style of Chaucer and his English successors. He subscribed wholeheartedly to the conventions of dream and garden, courts of love, Virtues and Vices. His discipleship though not exclusively Chaucerian left no room for original embellishment; it is a vain search to look for modification by the introduction of Scottish traits. What a Scottish Chaucerian with the limited genius of a Douglas can be like when he chooses to be merely a Chaucerian can be seen in such a stanza as the following from King Hart. (Sharp's Edition, Vol. I, p.86, ll.9-16).

"First war thair Strength, and Rage, and Wantownnes,
Grein Lust, Disport, Jelousy, and Invy;
Freschnes, New Gate, Waist-gude, and Wilfulnes,
Delyuernes, Fulehardenes thairby;
Gentrice, Fredome, Petie-previe I espy,
Want-wyt, Vanegloir, Prodigalite,
Unrest, Nicht-walk, and felon Glutony,
Unricht, Dyme sicht, with Slicht and Subtiltie."

In this dismal train of shadowy beings surely there is need for a glimmer of Northern realism. It is difficult to believe that this was written almost at the same time as "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis;" it is still more difficult to believe that critics have put the authors of these poems in the same school. In his two allegories Douglas was certainly a Chaucerian, using that term to denote membership of the Southern group who followed the master and it cannot be denied that the poet's nationality was Scottish; to this extent he was a Scottish Chaucerian. He does not belong to the rest of the group if by "Scottish" is meant allegiance to the Northern manner and the possession of Northern traits. The fact is that while his dulness is due in part to general weakness of his poetic constitution compared with his Scottish predecessors, it finds some explanation in the attachment to the conventional. Dr Lauchlan Maclean Watt in his critical study of the Aeneid (p.66) says, "His 'Palice of Honour' and "King Hart" have not the graciously divine gift. He is still, in them, standing deep in the earlier age, and cannot free his feet from the old convention and allegory, and from the habit of using certain epithets/

epithets, like a wedding garment kept in stock to be laid on the shoulders of every guest of thought whom the poet is expected to commend." Such is the end of Chaucerian discipleship! It is worth noting that whatever vices these poems reveal in Douglas they show that he had the virtue of catholicity in study.*

In his translation of the Aeneid Douglas belongs to the past. Dr Watt summarised his position in a phrase, "The Humanist is too frequently lost in the Mediaevalist." So much has been said in recent years by the critic already quoted and by Professor Gregory Smith concerning the mediaeval elements in his work that it would be something worse than reiteration to put the same points/

* In addition to Chaucer, Lydgate, Kennedy, Dunbar, and Quintyn Shaw Douglas refers to the following (Small's Edition, Vol.I, p.35).

"Thair was the greit Latine Virgilius,
The famous father poeit Quidius,
Dictes, Dares, and eik the trew Lucane,
Thair was Plautus, Poggius, and Persius,
Thair was Terence, Donate, and Seruius,
Francis Petrarche, Flaccus Valeriane,
Thair was Esope, Cato, and Allane,
Thair was Gaultier and Boetius,
Thair was also the greit Quintiliane.

Thair was the satir poet Juuenall,
Thair was the mixt and subtell Martiall.
Of Thebes brute thair was the poet Stace,
Thair was Faustus, and Laurence of the Vale,
Pomponius, quhais fame of late sans faill,
Is blawin wide throw euerie realme and place,
Thair was the morall wise poet Horace,
With mony uther clerk of greit auaill,
Thair was Brunell, Claudius, and Bocchas.

points here. Professor Courthope, Andrew Lang and T. F. Henderson regarded Douglas as "a lonely scholar in the midst of Vandal surroundings;" the judgment of Professor Gregory Smith that "he is in spirit and in practice a mediaevalist" is much more valid. The poems of Douglas, for what they are worth, must be granted as the product of Chaucerian discipleship and scholasticism. But even in spite of their concern with affairs remote from the events of the poet's own day and in spite of the literary sources of his inspiration, it is possible to see in his work a few traces of the national movement. The very fact that this ecclesiastic with his love of Latinity should turn the Aeneid into vernacular poetry is in itself an indication that the times had exerted some influence on him. He is anxious to rid himself of "sudron" as much as possible but finds that he cannot dispense with it entirely.

> "Nor yit sa cleyn all sudron I refus
> But sum word I pronounce as nychtbouris doys
> Lyke as in Latyn beyn Grew termys sum,
> So me behufyt quhilum, or than be dum,
> Sum bastard Latyn, Franch, or Inglys oys
> Quhan scant was Scottis, I had nane other choys."

Dr Watt goes so far as to say "Douglas felt that he was doing a patriotic work, - something for Scotland's sake." Another evidence of the influence of the national movement is in the Nature description contained in a few of the Prologues. The Seventh gives a realistic impression of a Northern Winter with its "Scharp soppis of sleit and of the snypand snawe." The

passage/

passage has undoubtedly earned its favour among anthologists. The Twelfth is also to be commended but it follows the Chaucerian fashion closely. It would be idle to claim Douglas as a poet inspired by the developing nationalism. His attitude to Scottish language and scenery may be cited as proof of some association but his inspiration was mainly drawn from the literature of the past. More than any of his predecessors in the group in which he is usually placed, his affinities are Chaucerian; the theory of discipleship accounts for his work more satisfactorily than for that of Henryson or Dunbar.*

Taking the Scottish Chaucerians altogether it is a distortion of the truth to present them as the intimate followers of the great master. In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to relate them to the earlier history of Scottish literature and to see their work as influenced profoundly by the development of national consciousness. It has not been the aim of this discussion to prove that they owed nothing to Chaucer nor even to explain their origin by appeal merely to the social and/

* The point of view taken in the foregoing criticism is identical with that of Professor Gregory Smith in the "Cambridge History of Literature" study of the Scottish Chaucerians. He says, speaking of "The Palice of Honour," "The whole interest is retrospective. Even minor touches which appear to give some allowance of individuality can be traced to predecessors. There is absolutely nothing in motif or in style to cause us to suspect the humanist."

and political history of Scotland together with Southern schooling. Literary movements are seldom inspired and directed by the conjunction of a few forces. The intention has been rather to indicate the importance of an influence which in the writer's opinion has received insufficient attention. At sundry times the temptation arose to make a personal evaluation of the poetic achievement of the Scottish makars and now a prompting to panegyrical conclusion must be resisted. It will suffice to say that the frequent study of the poets and the close examination of the critics have by no means vanquished an early enthusiasm.

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